

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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A PATH IN THE GREAT WATERS.

THE little Dorsetshire town of Poole was a busy and important seaport in the year 1803. It is busy and important still, but the years which have passed so lightly over the town, have not improved the harbour. A hundred and fifty years ago, old fashioned ships of five and six hundred tons, beak-heads, poop-lanthorns and all, could lie, loaded, alongside the Great Quay, where a large Newfoundland fishing-trade was carried on; but smaller vessels lie there now, and there is less water under them. There is little change in the appearance of the place; the wooded island of Branksome, or Brownsea (it is called by both names), lies just in front of it; and island and harbour alike are enclosed by the furze-covered sand-spits which stretch out as though Hampshire on the one side were reaching out hands to Purbeck on the other to enclasp and cut off ships, harbour, town and all, from Poole Bay. But it is as easy to keep a boy shut in the nursery as to bind the landward streams that seek their way to the great sea; the boy finds his way out into the world, and the ebb-tide runs deep and fast through the channel opposite Branksome Castle.

There was then,—for augt I know, there may be still—an old tavern, which stood in a convenient position among the houses and warehouses on

the landward side of the road which skirted the Great Quay. Fifty yards or so from its open door were the stone stairs where the tides crept up and down, and ships' boats made fast, and seamen and fishermen came ashore to rest from their labours. They always rested in the same way, —leaning against whatever was convenient, with their hands in their pockets. Also they needed much liquid refreshment; for the sea, look you, is salt, and therefore a sailor in repose is usually thirsty. The little tavern stood ready to satisfy their legitimate desires, and those who were not resting outside of it were usually to be found refreshing themselves inside. On this chilly September evening, when stormy grey clouds were driving in long procession out of the south-west, and dull grey waves were keeping step with them all across the harbour, there was more attraction inside than out. The warm glow of a fire shone through the red curtains of the long room beside the bar. A sign-board, swinging from an iron bracket over the door, displayed a house-painter's impression of a fat old sloop, and the legend *The Portsmouth Packet, by William Steele*. Two hoyes made the passage twice a week, one up and one down, from Portsmouth to Poole, wind, weather, and French privateers permitting; and here freights were

paid, passages booked, and goods warehoused. If the cellars sometimes contained stuff that had paid no duty to King George, that concerned nobody but the landlord and the Revenue officers; and they were kept exceedingly busy, for most of the inhabitants of the sea-coast, gentle and simple, were more or less in sympathy with the free-traders.

The Portsmouth hoy had come in early in the afternoon and was lying at the quay. An armed cutter, flying a naval pendant, had followed her, and now lay at anchor in the channel, three hundred yards out. As the sun went down (it was so hidden in leaden clouds, that nothing but the almanac announced the fact), her boat was hoisted out, and four seamen rowed the lieutenant in command to the stairs. No sooner had he disappeared up one of the narrow streets which led through the merchants' warehouses into the High Street, than two of the men made the best of their way towards the Portsmouth Packet, while the other two took the boat back to the cutter. A last hail came across the water: "Remember, you two! Skipper'll be down at eleven. You've got to be here a good quarter of an hour before; and if so be you've shipped more than you can carry, you'll pay more than the reckonin'"; and the click of the oars grew fainter as they pulled back to the cutter.

"Now then," said the elder of the two, a rough fellow in rough sea-clothes, fisherman's boots, canvas petticoat, Guernsey frock, and fur cap, "you ain't in such a blessed hurry that you can't stop for a mouthful o' rum, John Corsellis? It won't hurt you, nor yet them long togs of yours."

The younger man was clad in the height of naval dandyism; striped

blue and white trousers falling loosely round the ankle and short enough to exhibit grey yarn stockings and buckled shoes; a short blue jacket, brass-buttoned, and open in front to show a checked shirt and loose black neckerchief; the whole crowned with a black tarpaulin hat and a carefully tied pigtail which reached almost to the hem of his jacket, or as he would have phrased it, "down to his transom."

"Ain't got time, Jim Collins; it'll take me nigh half an hour to get word to my gal up Parkstone way; and then she's got to make an excuse to get out."

"Have you got one,—like the chap in the song—at every port? There was one at Porchmouth, and the widder at Weymouth as keeps the Ship, and one at Devonport, and another at Fowey, and this one; beside others as I can't call to mind."

"Well, you see, it's like this. A chap feels lonesome like, adrift in a strange port, if he ain't got a gal's waist to take a hitch round. It's good for me, and I don't know as it does any harm to them. Reckon we're both satisfied."

"Both?" said Jim. "There's too many of 'em. That's the trouble. You're trying to command a whole fleet, and no signals either. A woman's all right while you stays on the quarter-deck and cons her yourself; but directly you're over the side, there's some other chap takes charge, and he ain't agoin' to keep station for you."

"You're nigh as doleful as them Falmouth men on the cutter, always a foretellin' disasters."

"Ain't them Falmouth men got reason to grumble? Every seaman has some rights, I reckon; but that Walker, he up and steers right through or over, hazin', bad grub, and all, just as if we was dogs."

"What are we to do then?
Mutiny!"

"It might come to that. Others have done it afore."

"Yes, and been laid by the heels. I ain't no ways wishful to get five hundred round the fleet, or be hanged,—like them Albanaises what we saw to Plymouth."

"Don't you intend to do nothing, then?"

"Yes; I'm goin' to see my gal."

"That's you all over, John. You keep no look out ahead, and you won't shift your helm for anything that's a-comin'; ram jam, right ahead, never take no thought!"

"Life ain't like a purser's cheese, with all the profit in the parin's. There's no sense in shortenin' sail to-day because it may come on to blow to-morrow. Carry on and make a passage, that's my way of it; time enough to snug down when the squall comes. Here, take a drink and cheer up. Off she goes!" and Corsellis set off up the Parkstone Road as fast as his sea-legs could carry him, while Collins bore up for the Portsmouth Packet.

The type to which John Corsellis belonged was not uncommon among the curiously diversified seamen of that date. Curly-haired (save for the pigtail), blue-eyed, and well-grown, the son of a broken-down hard-drinking Cornish seaman, he had shipped, as a ragged boy, on board of a West-country privateer, and had been pressed into the Navy at eighteen. Afloat he was a quiet, disciplined, capable seaman; ashore he was as mischievous and irresponsible as a monkey. He had no more ambition than a sheep, no more book-learning than a jackass, and no less courage than a bulldog. To fear God and honour the King,—both at a respectful distance,—to obey orders, and to hate a Frenchman as the Devil, were

the principal articles of his simple creed. To risk his life for prize-money, to grumble because there was no more of it, and then fling it away as if the hard-earned coins were drops of water, was his practice. He had no sentimental affection for the sea, but he loved a comfortable ship and a good sea-boat. The shore to him was a place of relaxation, where sailor-men went for a spree because liquor and girls were to be found there; of the joys of home or domestic happiness he had no more conception than a sea-gull. He had neither thrift nor forethought, but he would do nothing that he considered mean or dirty. In his dealings with beauty the tenderness of his heart was only equalled by the toughness of his conscience, and in love he was constant as the needle to the Pole,—but with a very considerable allowance for deviation. He was ignorant, reckless, and intemperate, but his vices harmed few beside himself, while his rough virtues were of the highest value to the nation. Meanwhile, he was one of that obscure body of seamen who were building up the British Empire, while nine-tenths of the people sang their praises, and the other tenth stole their money.

A fairly numerous company was assembled in the long room to the left of the bar when Jem Collins entered, townsmen, fishermen, and seamen. There were oaken tables and benches; a high-backed settle stood on each side of the fire-place, and William Steele, the landlord, stood with his back to it, pipe in hand. He was in his shirt-sleeves, his apron twisted up round his waist, and his striped waistcoat with its deep-flapped pockets tied tightly with strings across the place where the small of his back had once been. Big, taciturn, and stolid, he fanned the smoke away with his hand, before

he nodded to Collins and gave him good-evening.

"Are you from the cutter, mate?"

"Aye, aye, King's cutter PIGMY,—just brought the skipper ashore."

"Who commands her now?" asked the landlord.

"Lootenant Walker, since last March, when Jerry Coghlan was moved into the NIMBLE."

"Walker?" said the landlord slowly. "Twas Walker that had the NIMBLE before, wasn't it?"

"So 'twas. I'll take a glass of rum and a pipe o' tobacco, thankee. He've got us now, worse luck."

"What's wrong with Walker, then?"

"Walker? He's in too much of a hurry to make his fortune. He's got a wife and kid ashore at Dartmouth. Kid's one year old, but I'm blest if Walker ain't got him on the cutter's books a'ready and rated A.B. More'n that, he sent one of the hands up to Portsmouth in the kid's name, to draw the five-pound bounty; give him a crown, he did, to hold his tongue, and put the rest in his own pocket. Half our stores goes ashore to his house, and we gets salt herrin's and any sort of truck to make out with. He's a reg'lar hung-in-chains, so he is. Somebody's got to get even with Mr. Lootenant Walker one of these days, and it'll be a full day's job too."

"Is the press hot in Portsmouth, mate?" enquired a long-voyage man, a Southseaman, as they were called at that time.

"Nothin' to speak of now; but, Lord, you should have seen it three months back! Cleared every ship in the Camber, they did, and the skippers left all alone, in charge."

"Cleared the theatre too, didn't they?"

The cutter's man grinned, as one who recalls a pleasant memory. "No,

that was at Plymouth,—took 'em all out of the gallery, at the Dock Theatre,—on'y left the women to see the show."

"Weren't the town pretty wild about it?"

"Not they! There was a broken head or two, but all taken in good part; and we was complimented in the newspaper."

"Ugh!" grumbled an undersized townsman in top-boots, "and they calls this a free country!"

"Twouldn't be so for long, if 'twasn't for the fleet as keeps Boney away; and ships ain't much use without men to work 'em. But I allow it was curious how easy folk took it. Now, if it had been a Revenue job, seizin' contraband stuff, like as not there'd have been shootin' and a lot of poor fellows hurt and killed. Here we was, takin' the men themselves, and no more than a rough-and-tumble, say no more about it, and never a weapon shown, on'y a stick or two."

"That's right and proper enough," said an old fisherman. "Someone's got to fight the French, and shut 'em up in Bullong. Admiral Nelson himself can't do it without men, and we know we've all got to go, if so be King George wants us."

"Well, don't he want his taxes and duties, and what not?"

"Not he! He've a got millions. What do a little bit o' tea and spirits matter to he? 'Tis nothin' to him; but 'tis our livin', and bread and butter for the kids. We can spare the men; like enough they'd on'y be in mischief if they was ashore. But as for them Revenue swine, as goes about sneakin' and spyan' how to steal poor men's goods and jail 'em,—there, I'd drown the lot, if I'd my way of it!"

There was a general murmur of approval.

"Damnation to all Custom-house

and Revenue men, says I," growled another man, and the sentiment seemed popular.

"Time of peace is a bad time for free-traders," observed a quiet tradesman-like man in snuff-brown, with knee-breeches and buckled shoes. "While the war was on the cruisers were busy lookin' for the Frenchmen ; directly the peace was declared, they'd nothing to do, so all the lot, frigates, sloops and all, was set to hunt the smugglers."

"D'y remember Billy Swayne?" said another. "He was the man that owed 'em a grudge."

"Ah!" said the landlord, meditatively. "I only clapped eyes on Billy Swayne once, when me and Joe, my man, went over so far as Falmouth, about,—well, about a bit of business. He didn't use this coast at all,—at no time, he didn't—but I see him then. Billy always said 'twas no fair capture; that's what made him so wild, according to what I was told."

"Couldn't well have been no fairer as I can see," chuckled the old fisherman. "They took Billy, and they took his boat, and they took his cargo; and they fined him all the money he'd got, and give him six months as well. He'd ought to ha' been satisfied."

"No, 'twasn't that; but they'd altered the law. Up to July last year contraband couldn't be seized outside the four-league line. Billy had been over on the French side a goodish while, and the *SWIFT*,—that was his boat, a sweet cutter that had been the *BONAPARTE*, a French privateer—sailed out of Granville the very day they got word over that the limit was to be eight leagues. A easterly gale blew him fair out of the Channel, and it took him a matter of ten days to beat back. When he was six leagues off the Dodman, up

comes the *NIMBLE* cutter. Knowin' he was well outside, Billy took no notice, and let 'em come aboard. There was the stuff, five hundred tubs, just under the hatches when they raised 'em. 'This is seized,' says Walker; and Billy looks at him and laughs. 'Yours is a dirty business, Lootenant,' he says, 'but you might so well take the trouble to learn it. I reckon I'm all of six leagues out.' 'That would ha' been all right a week ago, my man,' says Walker, 'but it's eight leagues now, and I've got you.' They say,—them as was there—that Billy swore till the head-sheets fair rattled and shook—him bein' hove to; but anyway they took him; and he took his oath he'd have Walker's life, for chousin' him like that."

"Billy was a hard man, for sure!" said the fisherman. "They say he run down a Custom's boat once, and never stopped to pick 'em up. He'd sunk his tubs, and buoyed 'em. 'If it's the stuff they're seekin',' he says, 'let 'em go to the bottom and find it.'"

"How many hands might you have aboard the *PIGMY* now?" asked one. "I heard say they took all the men out of the small craft when the war begun again, to man the line-of-battle ships."

"So they did, last June; some of ours was turned over to the *CANOPUS*, and some to the *VILL-DE-PARRY*. Left us with on'y a dozen, they did; that would ha' been the time for your Billy Swayne to come ath'art us. But we was in Falmouth a week later, lookin' for men; and a score or more came to Walker when he was ashore, volunteered for the *PIGMY*, and got the bounty,—said they'd belonged to a letter-of-marque as was taken by a French privateer. The Frenchmen took the guns, ammunition and arms out of her,—made us laugh a bit, it did—took the mate

too, for a keepsake like—and then ransomed the ship for a hundred and sixty pounds. So they took her home, and was turned adrift."

"Did they say what ship?"

"Let's see, something out of Plymouth. Ah! JOSEPH AND GRACE,—that's what it were."

"Dunno how that could be," said a seamen. "I heard tell in Plymouth that the JOSEPH AND GRACE had been re-armed, and sent to sea in a hurry to get the owners' money back; and the crew was kept on,—so they said."

"I expect Walker wanted the men more than the story," said Collins; "any way he took 'em."

The wild south-west wind that swept the Channel and wreathed the headlands of Purbeck with flying rain-clouds, drove many to shelter from its violence that night. It drove John Corsellis, wet and happy, with his sweetheart's kisses tingling on his lips, into the Portsmouth Packet, accompanying him into the house with a rush of wind and rain that slammed the doors and guttered the candles. With a louder howl and a stormier swirl of rain it ushered in another of the cutter's crew, who came to call his shipmates to their waiting boat. They asked him to drink, and turning to give his order, he encountered the landlord's dull eyes fixed upon him in a steady stare. For a moment the two looked at each other in silence; then, turning his back on Steele, the newcomer, without a word, went out again into the wind and the darkness. The other two paid their shot, and followed him.

It was just eleven. First one guest, and then another, announced that he was "for home-along;" and with many noisy *good-nights* plunged into the foul weather outside. When all had departed, and the potman was closing the house, Steele went to

the door and stood for a while, half sheltered behind it. He saw the lanthorn brought from the boat to the quay-edge, to guide the cloaked lieutenant down the slippery stairs. He heard the order, "Give way, men!" and the smack of the oars as they fell together on the water. Then the dancing boat moved, a shadowy shape, across the tide, breaking up its wavering reflections. It reached the cutter, and the swaying lanthorn passed up the side and disappeared, while the cutter's riding light swung mistily across the dark shadow of Brankssea Island.

"Joe!"

"What is it, Guv'nor?"

"You saw that chap that came in just before closing, and went out again in a hurry?"

"I did."

"Did you ever see him afore?"

"Not as I knows on, Guv'nor."

"Think again, Joe. The man were clean-shaved. Well, put a pair of whiskers on that face, most big enough to cover it; put gold rings in his ears, and clap a skirt and gilt buttons on that jacket of his. D'y'e know him now?"

"Can't say I do, Guv'nor. Who is he?"

"I shouldn't wonder, Joe, if there was goin' to be trouble aboard the PIGMY cutter, for that there man was Billy Swayne."

The hired armed cutter, PIGMY, as she was officially described, was a boat of about a hundred and forty tons, stoutly built of oak. She was eighteen years old, painted black and yellow, with a round bow and a square transom, surmounted by a counter so short that it looked like a cornice. Her bowsprit was very long, and the mainsail had a square head with little peak to it. The topmast carried a square topsail, and

on the lower topsail-yard was set a kind of boom-foresail, goosewinged across the forestay, with the clews hauled out to the ends of a swinging boom, hoisted half way up the lower mast. On her deck, twenty-three feet wide, she carried two long six-pounders and ten twelve-pounder carronades. The officer's cabin was aft, a little box of a place only five feet and a half high, with a narrow table in the middle and cabins on each side for the lieutenant and the master. Forward of that was another cabin with standing berths on each side for the warrant-officers and the two midshipmen; and the berth-deck of the crew, some forty men, took up all the rest of her. The main hatchway admitted light and air to the berth-deck, and a skylight and a small companion-way served for the quarters aft. There was very little room on her deck, for the boat and spare spars filled the space between the companion and the main-hatch, while the carronades and slides left but a narrow gangway on each side of them.

About the end of September the *PIEMY* was on her regular cruising ground in the chops of the Channel, working slowly to windward against a light westerly wind. She was short-handed, for she had captured and sent in a small privateer and a brig, and both the midshipmen and a dozen of the crew had been sent away in charge of them. The privateer had shown fight, wounded two men, and sent a shot through the bottom of the boat: the carpenter's patches had leaked badly; and as the weather was fine the boat was towing astern to allow the new seams to "take up." The wind was falling light and the horizon was hazy, with low flat clouds that threatened fog.

"I think I shall haul up for

Plymouth to-morrow, Mr. Martin," said Walker, as he took a fisherman's walk (five steps and overboard) with the master about sundown. "We're too short-handed to do any good, and the men we've got are the worst I've ever sailed with. Boatswain tells me they answered him back and threatened him when he went forward to stop a row this afternoon."

"That's the Falmouth lot, sir; the sooner we get them under the guns of a frigate the better I shall be pleased. I'm sorry you didn't send some of them away in the prizes and keep our old trusties aboard here."

"If I had, like as not we'd never have seen men or prizes again. How could I send away these blackguards in charge of a midshipman? They're half-mutinous now."

"That's so, sir; and that reminds me of something. I met the boatswain of the *NIMBLE* ashore in Plymouth, and he asked me if it was true that we'd shipped a crew of smugglers. Said he'd heard talk about it ashore."

"Smugglers, eh?" said Walker thoughtfully. "Well, it's possible. I was pretty busy in the *NIMBLE* and seized a good few cargoes. There's plenty of smugglers that owe me a grudge; and hang me if I haven't thought once or twice that I'd seen some of their ugly faces before. We'll keep watch and watch till we get in, Mr. Martin. See that none but the old hands come aft to take the helm; we'll keep those brutes forward. Send the gunner to me in the cabin; and mind you, turn in all standing, ready for a call."

The fog thickened. When the watch was changed at midnight and the master relieved the lieutenant, a sudden noise broke out forward, a noise of loud voices and

struggling feet. The first of the watch to come on deck was Corsellis. He came up hurriedly, hatless, without a jacket, and bare-footed, and went aft at once to relieve the helm. The noise ceased as suddenly as it began, and the rest of the watch passed forward, a blur in the fog about the mast. There was not wind enough to keep a course, and the boom swung slowly in-board.

"Wind's died right away, sir ; she won't steer."

"Then we must just wait till the breeze comes again and blows this filthy fog clear," said the master. "Hullo ! What's the matter with your face ? It's bleeding ; and where's your hat and jacket ?"

"Bit of a row forward, sir. They was tryin' to prevent the old hands comin' on deck."

"They,—who ?"

"Them Falmouth men, sir. I broke through 'em ; and I'm just as glad to be on deck, jacket or no jacket, wet or dry, for I think the Devil's broke loose aboard this ship."

"What do you mean ?"

"Was all the arms returned after the action with the privateer, sir ?"

"Why do you ask ?"

"Because I see cutlasses and pistols down forward just now."

"Good Lord !" said the master. "Look here, if that's so, you'd best speak up plain. Do you think there's going to be trouble to-night ?"

"Dunno what to think, sir. I don't like the look of it."

The master took a turn across the deck. Then, bidding Corsellis keep his eyes open, and sing out lively if he saw any of them coming aft, he went below. Presently a faint light glimmered through the skylight ; it could not be seen from forward, because the companion-way was between, but the fog seemed to glow with it. In a few minutes the master re-

turned, wearing his sword, followed by Walker, the gunner, and the boatswain, each with a couple of loaded muskets which they stowed carefully on the top of the companion-hatch, with a coat over them to keep the primings dry. All were armed.

"Is the door in the forward bulk-head secured, sir ?" asked the master in a low voice.

"The carpenter's screwing it up now," said Walker. "Here he is. All fast, Carpenter ?"

"Yes sir ; but they've just been trying the door."

"Slip forward quietly, two of you, and see if you can clap the hatch on. It's better to tackle one watch at a time, if we can."

The carpenter and boatswain crept forward keeping under the shelter of the bulwark. They reached the hatchway unobserved, but as they laid hands on the cover a voice hailed them from forward. "Let that hatch be, d'ye hear ? Below there ! Tumble up quick !"

There was a rush of men up the hatchway, and the two warrant-officers ran aft and seized each a musket. They took the port side ; the rest held the starboard.

"Who is that that dares give orders on my ship ?" shouted Walker. "Why are you laying aft ? Go forward to your duty !"

"Duty be damned ! I'll attend to my duty and you too, presently. Who am I ? I'm Billy Swayne, I am, the man you robbed and ruined, you swindling thief ! You thought you was damned clever that day ; but I'm cleverer than you, you cuckoo, and you never knowed me. You're a-going to know me now. Listen to me, you there, aft. It's the lootenant I want ; I'm goin' to twist his neck. The rest of you would as lief save your lives as not, I reckon. Give me Walker, and I'll set the rest of you safe ashore

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in a French port. Resist, and I'll make a *HERMIONE* job of it."

No one answered. There was a heavy flap of canvas and the boom swung out on the port side to the stretch of the sheet, and brought up with a jerk; the breeze was coming.

"Now then, you!" growled Swayne again. "It's life or death, no less. What's your answer?"

"Here's mine!" roared the gunner, and let fly at Swayne, missing him and killing a man behind him.

Walker and the rest followed with a straggling volley. Two or three of the mutineers dropped, but the rest replied with a dozen scattered pistol-shots, and the gunner collapsed against the port bulwark, shot through the heart.

"Take the boat, sir! It's our only chance," cried Corsellis, letting go the tiller.

"Haul her up on the starboard quarter in case we want her," said Walker. "Stand by, all of you! Here they come!"

The rush of the mutineers was beaten back on the weather side; but the carpenter, left alone, was driven across the deck, and the defenders were penned into the starboard quarter. Corsellis hauled the boat up. A light puff of air filled the mainsail, and left to herself, the cutter ran up into the wind with everything shivering.

"Now, Mr. Martin," said Walker; "you first, and be quick about it."

Martin dropped into the boat; he was a thickset, heavy man, and his weight depressed her bows; she took a sudden sheer across to port, where some of the mutineers were clustered. One of them,—Jim Collins—threw his leg over the rail, and, reaching out, caught the master by the collar. Martin clutched his wrist, and tried to draw a pistol; but a shot fired over Collins's shoulder struck him in

the head, and he fell backwards into the boat, dragging Collins over the stern after him.

Swayne dodged under the boom and rushed at Walker, followed by half-a-dozen more; but the boatswain brought his cutlass down on Swayne's shoulder and clinching, the two rolled together on the deck. The carpenter lay across a carronade, with his skull split.

Suddenly the mainsail filled on the other tack. The boom swung heavily over to starboard, with a clatter of blocks, and brought up with a jerk that shook the ship. Walker, who was standing on the rail waiting his chance to jump, received the full weight of the boom on the side of his head and went overboard. Corsellis, trying to haul the boat across, was kneeling on the slack of the sheet and was thrown clear over the counter as it sprang taut, losing hold of the painter as he fell. The boat dropped astern and was lost in the fog as the cutter forged slowly ahead.

Corsellis was a very indifferent swimmer at the best of times; and now, breathless from a hand-to-hand fight, he had little hope of saving himself. The cold was numbing. The sea had seemed smooth enough from the deck of the cutter; but a long swell was rolling in from the Atlantic which appeared overwhelming to a swimmer who could scarcely keep his head above water. Even without his jacket and barefooted, his clothes hampered him. The cutter was under way; there was no chance of reaching her, even if it had been safe to do so. His only chance, and that a poor one, was to follow the run of the sea and find the drifting boat; she could not be many yards away. The breeze was freshening and already the fog was shredding away, driving past in long fantastic wreaths like ghostly winding-sheets.

It was only a surface fog, and as it thinned a ray of moonlight silvered it, but it clung clammily to the water and he could see no further than the round back of the last roller that had swept past him and dropped him into the hollow behind it. The temptation to hurry his stroke was almost overpowering; but he retained sufficient self-control to resist it, for he dared not exhaust the little strength that was left him. At the end of five or six minutes he was getting his breath in short gasps and sinking lower and lower. As he was borne up on the shoulder of one long black wave he caught a glimpse of the bow of the boat, hove up upon the back of the next; and as the sea swept from under him and he sank into the valley behind it she was almost over his head. The painter was trailing over the bow and he caught it and tried to drag himself up; but as he lifted his arm to clutch the gunwale he went down and drank deep. A second time he tried, and caught it, but his numbed fingers could not keep their hold and he sank again. Blind and choking he snatched at it once more; and this time a hand caught him by the wrist and hauled him up till he got both arms over the gunwale. Then his leg was seized and dragged over the side. He rolled into the bottom of the boat utterly exhausted, and lay there, scarcely conscious if he were alive or dead.

He was soaked and shivering, yet there was comfort in the sense of rest after extreme exhaustion. Lying there, still almost upon the borderland of this world and the next, he had an experience that was new to his happy-go-lucky existence. He thought, and, so far as he was able, he thought seriously. Death had been face to face with him, stared him in the eyes, and passed him by; death by the bullet, by the steel, and

by the cold black water. They had encountered before, but never before had he seen him so close, so busy, and so sudden. He had caught a glimpse of great mysteries that were strange and terrible to him. Not poppy nor mandragora could restore to him the light heart of yesterday; the every-day world had suddenly grown strange and unfamiliar. Later he remembered one thing which seemed curious; among all the sudden and violent forms death had assumed, he had foreborne to show himself in the grim shape in which he was to come at last.

Presently he dragged himself up with one arm over the bow thwart, and looked round him. Sitting in the stern sheets was Jim Collins, his elbows on his knees and his chin resting on his hands; the master's cutlass lay across his lap and a pistol was handy on the seat beside him. Between them lay the body of the master, like a broken doll; his legs over one thwart, his head thrust forward by another; dead surely, for only death could leave a man so hideously a-sprawl.

Collins looked across at him, grinning in the moonlight. "What cheer, messmate? You was pretty nigh gone when I ketched hold of you, wasn't you?"

Dazed as he was, the rage of the fight still flickered up in Corsellis's muddled brain. "You're a bloody mutineer, Jem Collins. We've been mates, you and me, since we shipped, but by the Lord! I'll hang you if ever we gets ashore."

"That's good quarter-deck talk, John, and does you credit. But how was you going to do it?"

"I know enough to hang you, you'll allow; and I'll give my evidence."

"And what do you suppose I'd be doin' the while, John? We're messmates, says you, and I reckon I've

saved your life, and no one more surprised than me when you come cruisin' alongside like a mermaid. But I ain't goin' to let you hang me, not yet awhile, I ain't. I've got a tongue, haven't I? And I can kiss the book as well as another. Over and above that, I can spin a sight better yarn than what you can."

"What d'ye mean?"

"Just this. If I'm hanged for a mutineer, where was you, do you suppose? If I swear you was in it, where's your evidence? Who'll speak for you? Not Walker, for he's overboard; I saw him go. Not the master, here, for he's dead as nits. So was the rest of 'em by what I see; and if not, Swayne won't give 'em a chance to talk. The three as wouldn't join saw nothing, for they was lashed in their hammocks below; and you may take your Bible oath that Swayne and his lot won't tally on to your yarn."

"It's the truth!"

"Ah! and truth is truth, says you. So 'tis; but a lie's better if it seems more likely. Seems to me, we're shipmates still, my lad, and sink or swim together. Now it's no use our pulling ourselves to bits trying to overhaul the cutter. She ain't lookin' for us, and it's breezin' up an' she's goin' at the rate of knots. We're all of thirty mile from the nearest land, and that's French, Morlaix or thereabouts; and that's where Swayne'll make for, for he's known there, so he said. We daren't be picked up by one of our cruisers, for that's death, my son, and you may lay to it. What we want is a Frenchman or a neutral, and blessed quick too, or we'll starve aboard this here boat. And look-a-here, John, the sooner we gets rid of that," he nodded at the body of the master, "the better for all concerned."

Corsellis took no notice. He was

shivering, and not with cold and wet alone. Until Collins spoke he had not realised his danger; now he was looking down a long vista of ugly possibilities; at the end of them all was some one swinging from a yard-arm, and the figure seemed familiar.

Collins emptied the dead man's pockets; a silver watch disappeared inside his jacket, and dividing a few guineas and some silver into two portions, he offered one to Corsellis.

"No," said Corsellis, shivering; "it's blood-money."

"I don't deny that's a right and proper way for you to look at it, shipmate. You hadn't as good reason to hate Walker, not by half, as what I had; you never had your back scratched. Howsoever, there's no sense in pitching good money overboard, so I'll keep it. Over he goes!" And with a strong heave he rolled the master's body over the side.

Loyalty, with Corsellis, was neither a settled principle nor an emotion. A sea-waif from his youth up, he had acquired it as a habit. When the habit was rudely interrupted by the mutiny he had no deep or settled conviction to hold him straight; he could only follow the lead of the shipmate who was stronger and cleverer than he, and it was his instinct to obey orders. If Collins told him that it was death for him to set foot again on a King's ship, where he might be recognised as one of the *Pigmy*'s crew, —well, that was hard, for after all he had done the best he could. But Collins was a long-headed chap and knew more than most. They must stick together and wait for a fair wind. Collins would know how to work a traverse by-and-by, and get back. Plenty of other good men had been mixed up in the recent mutinies, and under a cloud; and lots of them had gone back to their duty, and

fought for the King as they ought. They were on a lee-shore now, no doubt ; all they could do was to stand on under easy sail, and keep the lead going ; and anyway Collins was in charge.

They spoke little, keeping watch and watch till day broke. Afterwards they starved and dozed by turns ; till about two in the afternoon, Corsellis, his teeth chattering in his head with the chill of a dozen hours in dripping clothes, pointed away to the southward. "Jim, there's a sail away yonder. What shall we do ?"

"Take the oars till we can make her out. If she's one of our cruisers, we've got to keep out of sight. If she's a trader or a Frenchman, well and good ; but it's the yard-arm for us to be taken aboard a cruiser. You've good eyes, John ; what do you make of her ?"

"Top-sail schooner. We ain't got a many schooner cruisers ; likely she's French."

"Lord send it is so ! Don't let her come too near till we're sartain sure."

The absence of a pendant reassured them a little. Perhaps twenty hours without food inclined them to take chances ; the schooner was steering to pass close by them, and presently they put up an oar with a jacket on it. The schooner hove-to close to them, and they pulled alongside. They were in luck ; it was a French privateer, hailing from St. Malo ; a well-known one too, the MALOUINE, Captain L'Orient.

The captain could speak a little English, and Collins told him as much as was convenient for him to know ; but the yarn would not have satisfied a child.

"*C'est bien curieux*," said the captain, with a shrug. "I find you out here, *en pleine mer*, in man-of-war boat, ze bottom all bloody, *hein* ? I

do not tink you care to go ashore in English port. Dey hang you up, eh ? If I take you to France, dey put you in prison, two, tree years, for example. Better to remain wiz me. Many of my *équipage*,—crew, you say —away in prizes, and I have need of Englishman to respond to English hail, see ? Vat you say ?"

Collins looked at Corsellis ; but this was a situation for which Corsellis's training had prepared him. He spat carefully on the sacred quarter-deck, looked the Frenchman straight in the face, and expressed the traditional sentiment of the British Navy. "I'll see you damned first, from truck to keelson, I will, and from fashion-piece to wing-transom ; and not then I won't, you frog-eatin' *mounseer* !" Again he spat ceremoniously on the planks to mark his peroration ; then crossing the deck with the grace and dignity of a three-decker in a tide-way, leaned against the rail, folded his arms, and scowled, as bitterly as his boyish features would permit, at the indignant Frenchman.

The captain half drew his sword, spluttering threats, but Collins, speaking low, appeased him. "He ain't quite right in his head, *mounseer*. He was queer-like in the boat, and he's wet to the skin. Don't you go for to put him in irons. Leave him to me, and I'll argey with him ; he'll do what I say."

"Ver' well," said L'Orient. "If he stop foolish, dere will always be time to imprison him when I go in. I give him two, tree days. Now go forward."

The discipline of a privateer was more elastic than that of a man-of-war, and for the next week the two masterless men went about the ship much as they pleased. They messed with the crew forward, and turned in at night into two of the spare

hammocks, doing no duty and standing no watch. But all Collins's arguments failed to move Corsellis. He absolutely refused to enter as a privateersman, and was firm in his determination to go to prison as soon as the *MALOUINE* put in to a French port, always provided that he could not give them the slip first. He never got the chance to do either. A West Indiaman was captured and sent in, and he watched for an opportunity to smuggle himself on board of her, to take his chance as one of her crew; but Collins and he were confined below during the chase, and only allowed on deck after the prize-crew had sailed with her.

One morning, when the grey mist thinned off the sea, a man-of-war brig loomed largely through the haze, not three miles away; and the *MALOUINE*, only half-manned, crowded all sail to a light easterly wind to escape, while the brig set every stitch that would draw in chase. The *MALOUINE* was foul, and her heels were clogged, but mast-wedges were knocked up, standing rigging slackened, sails wetted, and she kept out of range for six hours, neither pursuer nor pursued doing more than five knots. At about three in the afternoon the brig had closed to less than a mile distance on the weather-quarter of the *MALOUINE*, and a red flash came from her starboard bow port, followed by a tumbling cloud of white smoke, and the scream of a six-pound shot. As the heavy thud of the report passed echoing away a spout of spray rose within two hundred yards of the Frenchman's stern, and the ricochetting ball almost reached her. The *MALOUINE*'s four-pounders were as yet unequal to the range; but a few minutes later a shot from the brig passed through the foot of the mainsail, and an answering shot from

the Frenchman knocked some splinters from the brig's bulwarks. Only two or three guns could be brought to bear on either ship, but they were served for all they were worth. A well-aimed shot from the brig killed two and wounded three more of one gun's crew, dismounting the gun, and every minute brought the brig nearer. She was steering a course that would bring her abreast of the chase at about a hundred yards distance, and already the four forward guns on her starboard side were in action. The two renegades kept out of the way, well forward by the windlass.

"Now look you here, John," said Collins, alert and apparently as confident as ever, though his voice shook with excitement. "That chap's sartain to run us aboard. If it comes to boardin' you and me go below and stop there. When we're taken, we'll up and tell 'em straight that we're prisoners. You mind the West Indiaman we sent in? *WHITE SWAN* of London, Wilson master, homeward bound from Jamaiky, forty days out; that were our ship, and we was not allowed to go with the rest, along of the schooner bein' shorthanded."

"How about the Frenchmen? Won't they split on us? Pretty slack yarn, ain't it?"

"What in thunder are we to do else? Our necks are fair in a halter as you may say, and the rope rove. It's just a bare chance to get 'em out. There ain't no yarn as we can spin that's anyway ship-shape; we're all aback and our luck's dead out."

"Why not tell 'em the real yarn?"

"'Cause no one'd believe it. If it's true as Gospel it's no use if it don't seem so. Hi! Look-a-yonder! By the Lord, we've a chance yet!"

A lucky shot had struck the brig's lee main-yard arm, and carried it away close to the slings. Half the main-course and main-topsail folded

up like a broken kite ; the brig staggered and lost way, while a yell of triumph came from the Frenchmen crowded aft. Their triumph was soon ended. A shot, ranging high as the brig rose on the swell, struck the schooner's fore-topmast just above the cap and cut it right out of her. Topsail, topgallant-sail, and a raffle of spars and rigging went over the side and towed there heavily. The flying jib, its halliards cut through, dropped into the sea and dragged from the jib-boom end ; the jib ran bagging and fluttering down with the stay ; the schooner would neither sail nor steer.

The Frenchmen rushing to the lee-rail hacked at the wreck with axes and cutlasses ; Collins, scrambling over the forecastle barricade, dropped into the head and went out on the foot-rope to cut the flying-jib clear, followed by Corsellis. The tack was foul round the jibboom-end, but he hacked through rope, canvas, and all, and the sail fell, fouled the bob-stay, and gathered in thick folds round the stem.

"Clear the blasted thing, can't you ?" roared Collins. Corsellis scrambled down the head-rails on the lee-side, and supporting himself by the hempen cable hanging from the hawse-hole, tried to drag the sail clear.

The big eighteen-gun brig ranged up to windward, not sixty yards away. Three or four of the schooner's larboard guns were fired in a straggling broadside ; but a volley of musketry rattled across her deck, and Collins doubled up over the jibboom. The full broadside of the brig crashed into the schooner. There was a blaze of flame, a stunning roar, and a shock like an earthquake. The whole afterpart of the schooner opened out like a basket, and rolling once or twice drunkenly, she went down, leaving only a few

fragments of scorched wreckage, and a cloud of fat black smoke hanging over them.

The brig's boats were lowered and pulled across and across that reeking patch of sea. There were many dead, scorched and mutilated, but only two living men ; Collins, shot through the body and bleeding to death, and Corsellis, supporting himself and his unconscious messmate on the wreck of the fore-topmast.

"Name of that schooner ?" said the officer in charge.

Corsellis, busy with Collins's wound, answered at once : "French privateer MALOUINE, sir, Captain L'Orient."

"And how the devil do you, an Englishman, come to be aboard of her ?"

Corsellis remembered his instructions. "Prisoners, sir. Taken in the WHITE SWAN of London, Captain Wilson, from Jamaica."

"You've got your story pat. There's never a French privateer afloat that hasn't got two or three such prisoners. See any more, men ? Give way, then."

Collins was carried below to the surgeon, and soon after, a man was sent to fetch Corsellis. "Your mate's slipping his wind," he said ; "he wants to see you."

Collins was sinking fast. The surgeon was busy and the two were left together.

"John—that you ! I can't see—I'm sorry—I got you into this mess. I meant—for the best. Tell 'em the truth—take care of yourself. Send—for an officer—I'll speak for you—all I can."

"Too late, Jim," said Corsellis. "I've told 'em the yarn you said, WHITE SWAN and all !"

"My God—then you're on the rocks, John—and it's me that put you there ! John—I'm goin'—I've no time—say you forgive me."

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"Lord, yes, Jim. Take a turn, mate, and hold on!" But Jim was gone.

They gave Corsellis a dry rig-out, and left him for a while to his own reflections. He had never contracted the habit of thinking, and now, though he tried to face his position and think out some rational course of action, he could not keep his mind from wandering. Poor Jim! An hour ago he had been a strong man; now, he was, what? Dead? Aye—that's what they called it. It didn't matter to him now, how things went,—even if he knew. But for himself, Corsellis! He'd better face it. Why, if things went ill with him, it might be his turn next! To be hanged,—ugh! Jim had better luck, to go easy in his hammock, chaplain or no chaplain.

A man touched him on the shoulder. "I'm master-at-arms aboard this brig," he said; "you're to come to the captain."

With his one epaulette on the left shoulder, Commander Pulling of the KANGAROO brig, was seated at the cabin-table, his first-lieutenant standing by his side.

"What is your name?"

"John—Ellis, sir." It was the first name that came into his head.

"What was the schooner?"

"LA MALOUINE, sir, privateer of St. Maloes, Captain L'Orient."

"What was her force?"

"Ten four-pounders and about fifty men, sir, but many of 'em was away in prizes; there wasn't more than thirty aboard."

"According to your statement you, and the man who was picked up with you, belonged to a prize of hers, the WHITE SWAN, West Indiaman, eh!"

Corsellis hesitated, his hands clenched tight, before he muttered huskily, "Yes, sir."

"You'll have to stand your trial for

being on board an enemy's privateer, you know. If your story is true, it will be at the Old Bailey; but if, as I suspect, you're a deserter from the Navy, it will be a court-martial. Better say nothing till you get legal advice."

For the first month Corsellis was confined in the civil prison, but his pitiless destiny was untiring and would not leave him long even in so much peace as may be found in gaol. A cartel arrived from Morlaix with exchanged prisoners, and she brought news of the mutiny of the PIGMY. The mutineers had taken her into Morlaix, and had at once dispersed; it was supposed that many of them had entered in various privateers of that port and St. Malo. The boatswain, who was found on board severely wounded, reported that the lieutenant, master, gunner, and carpenter had been murdered. There was a parade of all the prisoners in the gaol a few days later, when Corsellis was recognised by half-a-dozen men, and was at once sent in irons to the guard-ship.

At nine o'clock one morning in January a jack was hoisted at the mizen-peak of the SAN JOSEF of one hundred and ten guns, then lying in Plymouth Sound, and the deep boom of a gun announced the assembling of a general court-martial. Their Lordships had issued their commission to the Rear-Admiral, third-in-command, as President. He arrived in his barge, followed by twelve post-captains, who had been summoned as members of the court, and their boats were crowded at the great three-decker's booms and gangway like carriages outside a theatre.

In the absence of the Judge-Advocate and his deputy a leading Plymouth lawyer was appointed to act in their stead. He knew the duties of the office well, for there

had been many recent courts-martial ; and the *HERMIONE*, the *DANAE*, and the *ALBANIAISE* had furnished many precedents for the trial, and execution, of mutineers.

A naval court-martial must always be an impressive spectacle ; but it could never have a more effective setting than the low-pitched, heavily-timbered cabins of the old line-of-battle ships. The President sat at the head of the long table, and six captains, in order of seniority, sat on either side. At the foot (the forward end) was the chair of the Judge-Advocate, and at his left stood the prisoner, his head within a few inches of the massive beams above him. The light from the skylight in the quarter-deck fell on the seated members of the court and on the paper-strewn table between them ; the face of the man whose fate they were about to decide was in the falling shadow. At a small table within arms' length of him sat his counsel, or "next friend ;" a lawyer who had been instructed to defend him by the widow who kept the Ship at Weymouth, the only friend who came to help Corsellis in his hour of need. The witnesses stood in a knot together at the right hand of the Judge-Advocate, and a little crowd of spectators, naval and civilian, stood about the doorways and along the forward bulkhead.

There was little hesitation or delay about the proceedings. The court being sworn and the prisoner brought in by the provost-marshall, the charges were read by the Judge-Advocate, — mutiny, murder, and piracy, having been taken on board a French privateer in arms against the subjects of the King. Formal evidence was put in of the mutiny on board the *PIGMY* and the murder of the officers, as reported by the cartel ; and then one witness after

another took his place at the right hand of the Judge-Advocate, and gave his sworn testimony. Two or three swore to Corsellis's identity as one of the *PIGMY*'s crew ; and to each of these a question, written by the prisoner's counsel and handed by the prisoner to the Judge-Advocate, was put as to the character borne by Corsellis ; in each case the answer was most favourable. Men from the *KANGAROO* proved that he, together with another man mortally wounded, had been picked up from the wreckage of the *MALOUINE* privateer after an engagement in which several of the brig's crew had lost their lives. A watch was produced which had been found in the pocket of the wounded man, and was identified by a Plymouth watchmaker as the property of William Martin, late master of the *PIGMY*, for whom he had repaired it. That was the case for the Crown.

The prisoner's defence, drawn up by his counsel, was then read by the Judge-Advocate. It was the plain story of the actual facts, plainly told by the counsel, and set fairly before the court by the Judge-Advocate. That it was wild and improbable was no fault of theirs ; but its effect upon the court was decidedly unfavourable to the prisoner. The President put a few questions.

"During the struggle on the *PIGMY*, prisoner, did you become aware that the man Collins was one of the mutineers ?"

The prisoner hesitated, and turned hurriedly to his counsel.

"Your answer cannot harm him now," said the President. "Answer my question."

"I saw him among the mutineers."

"When he dragged you into the boat, was anything said ?"

"I called him a mutineer, and told him I'd hang him if we got ashore."

There was a movement in the court. One or two of the members shifted in their chairs to get a better view of the prisoner's face.

"What then?"

"He told me he'd hang me if I gave evidence against him."

A sound like an indrawn breath passed round the cabin; the favourable impression of a moment had gone by.

"You sat quietly in the boat with him; you saw him rifle the master's pockets and throw him overboard, and you did nothing?"

"What could I do? He was armed and I wasn't. And,—he was my messmate, and he'd saved my life. I wish to God Almighty he'd let me drown!"

"Afterwards you entered with him on board the privateer?"

"No, sir, I never did. When the captain asked me, I told him I'd see him damned first."

"Were you kept in confinement after that?"

"No, sir."

"Do you mean to say that you were left at liberty, after your refusal to join, to run about the ship as you pleased?"

"I believe 'twas thought we'd join 'em later, sir. I meant to go to prison, or to run if we got the chance; as God is my judge, I did."

"Why did you make a false statement when you were picked up, and conceal your identity?"

"Because he,—my mate that's dead—asked me."

When the court was cleared for the members to deliberate upon their finding, some few were inclined to give credit to the prisoner's statement; but the Judge-Advocate, being asked how far the court was justified in attaching weight to a statement unsupported by any evidence, cited a charge delivered to a jury by Mr. Justice Buller four

years before, in a similar case, tried at the Old Bailey; when he told them "that if they admitted the excuse of the prisoner they would have all the French privateers manned by British subjects, and their commerce would then be in a miserable situation."

The Judge-Advocate then put the question to each member separately, beginning with the junior captain: "Are you of opinion that the charge against the prisoner is proved or not proved?" Two were for acquittal on the charges of mutiny and murder: the rest considered all the charges proved, and in accordance with this finding the court pronounced sentence of death.

The doors were opened and the prisoner brought in. The President announced the finding of the court, and informed the prisoner that the sentence would be sent to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for confirmation.

Upon a cold wet morning some weeks later, a gun was fired from the SAN JOSEF and the yellow flag, the fatal signal for an execution, was run up to the foretopgallant-masthead. The same flag was hoisted on the frigate where the execution was to take place, and the crews of all the ships in the Sound were mustered on deck to hear the Articles of War read, and to await in silence the dread example which was to be set before them. A lieutenant with an armed boat's crew was sent off from each of them, and they gathered around the gangways on either side of the frigate. One man from each boat was summoned on board to assist in the execution; and then the boats drew back and lay on their oars in the dreary drizzle to give passage to the boat from the SAN JOSEF which brought the provost-marshall, the chaplain, and the condemned man to the last ship he would ever go on board of.

They read his sentence to him on the quarter-deck, and asked him if he desired to make any statement.

"On'y this,—I'm a sailor, and I'll die as a sailor should ; but more than that, I'll die innocent. The God I'm goin' before is my witness that I never was a mutineer nor yet a murderer. I've always tried to keep a straight course, but it seems as if there'd been something stronger than me,—a current like—setting me down to leeward all the while. I wish you all better luck than me, as have always done my duty. Some day or other the truth'll come out, and then perhaps you'll remember all this,—" he looked hurriedly round him—"and do me justice. That's all ! "

He walked quietly forward with the provost-marshall, and the mixed crowd of seamen, mostly strangers to each other, tallied on to the fall. One dropped on the wet deck in a dead faint, but the rest hung on to the rope and waited with heads

hung downward miserably. The fatal gun was fired and they stumbled blindly aft, thankful that their faces were turned away from their ugly work. So John Corsellis, who was guilty of no crime, but had always done his duty to the best of his ability, paid for his folly and ignorance at the current wages of sin. Wickedness and folly often stand in the dock side by side ; and in this world at least, wickedness often gets off with the lighter sentence.

They never knew the truth. When the boatswain was exchanged three years afterwards, he came to Plymouth and heard the story. He could not get rid of a hazy impression that he had seen Corsellis by the lieutenant's side, helping with the boat. If that was so,—well, it was very hard on him. But he couldn't be sure ; least said was soonest mended, and after all, it was the luck of a sailor.

W. J. FLETCHER.

ST. LUCIA, 1778.

BEFORE the opening of the fourth campaign of the War of American Independence in 1778, the entire aspect of the struggle was changed by France's open declaration of hostilities against England. So far the British had enjoyed undisputed supremacy at sea on the American coast, and had turned it to good account. The fleet had carried Howe's small army away from destruction in Boston in 1775 ; it had brought it back to the capture of New York and Rhode Island in 1776 and of Philadelphia in 1777 ; and, but for the imbecility of Lord George Germaine, it would have averted the disaster of Saratoga by transporting Burgoyne to New York. By the entry of the French navy on the scene, however, all this was changed. Doubtless there were many who would gladly have abandoned all operations against America and turned the whole strength of England against France ; but this was forbidden by the aggressive attitude of the Americans themselves. It is customary to represent them as an innocent, down-trodden people, who were driven by ill-treatment to take up arms for their defence. Nothing could be further from the fact. The revolutionary party in Boston was from the first bent on aggression. The riots over the Stamp Act were violent beyond all proportion to the provocation : the invasion of Canada preceded any attempt to drive the British from Boston ; and the despatch of seditious emissaries to the West Indies, and actual raids upon Bermuda and the Bahamas, furnish additional evidence that the revolu-

tionary leaders were inflated with offensive schemes of the most ambitious kind. The withdrawal of British troops from America would have brought about a fresh invasion of Canada, and a joint attack of Americans and French upon the West Indies. The British foiled the first by continuing offensive operations on the Continent. Their measures to protect the West Indies are the subject of the present article.

Both the British and the French possessions in the Caribbean Archipelago were and are divided into two groups, the eastward and the westward or, in the more familiar terms of the trade-wind, the windward and the leeward. Those of the windward chain, with which alone we are at present concerned, were at that time even more curiously divided between the two nations than at present. To windward of all lies Barbados, then as always English, in a most advantageous position, since being the nearest to Europe it was the first to receive troops and supplies from the old country, and could count upon a fair wind to distribute them among the other islands. It was beyond all others wealthy and prosperous, but having unfortunately no safe harbour, it could not be used as a naval base of operations. One hundred and fifty miles southwest of Barbados is Tobago, then the most southerly of our West Indian possessions ; and from Tobago northward there run in succession the English islands of Grenada and St. Vincent, which have none of them any safe harbour of importance, and

were then so slightly settled and so thinly populated as to be of comparatively little value. Each one of them possessed a small garrison of three or four hundred men, sufficient to protect them against the raids of the native Caribs (who were as yet still numerous and inclined to mischief), but wholly inadequate to repel a French attack.

North of St. Vincent, however, the chain of the British possessions was broken first by the French island of St. Lucia, with its excellent harbour of Port Castries, which was well fortified. Next to St. Lucia lies another French island, Martinique, with the harbour then called Fort Royal, which also was strongly fortified and held by a considerable garrison, having been for years the headquarters of the French to windward. Thirty miles north of Martinique comes Dominica, a British island, with no safe harbour, and at that time little settled and weakly held; then comes Guadeloupe, another French island, with a fine and well fortified harbour; and to north of Guadeloupe lies the cluster of British islets known officially as the Leeward Islands, all of them rich and prosperous at that time, but with no good port except at Antigua, where St. John's constituted the one British naval station. The trend of these eastern islands being in a curve from south-west to north-west, they are subject among themselves to the inexorable law of the trade-wind; and hence Grenada, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia are still officially called the Windward, and Antigua with her sisters the Leeward Islands. For instance, though you might sail from Martinique to Dominica in a few hours, you could not beat back from Dominica to Martinique in less than three or four days against wind and current; similarly the passage from

Barbados to Martinique would occupy twenty-four hours, but the return voyage was bound to occupy a fortnight or three weeks at least, and might on occasion prove absolutely impossible. But the chief advantage lay on the side of the French, for, with the exception of Barbados, Martinique and St. Lucia are the most easterly of the whole chain, and they have good harbours whereas Barbados has none. The task for the British was to find a position to seal the fountain-head of French aggression at Martinique.

Hence it was that in the middle of 1778 the Commander-in-Chief in America received orders to ship about six thousand of his troops to Barbados for a secret expedition to the West Indies. A powerful French fleet under Count D'Estaing had been on the American coast the whole summer but had accomplished nothing, and finally had sailed on November 4th for Martinique, to spend a profitable winter in the West Indies. On the very same day Commodore Hotham sailed from New York, escorting the fifty-nine transports on which the British troops were embarked, and set his course likewise for the West Indies. As the two commanders had started together, so they arrived practically together at their destination. D'Estaing with twelve unnumbered ships reached Martinique on December 9th; twenty-four hours later Hotham brought the whole of his unwieldy charge into Carlisle Bay at Barbados, and found, as he expected, a squadron lying there at anchor.

Very beautiful the sight must have been as the huge fleet came sliding in over the clear, blue water, with the sails shining white under the tropical sun and the line of red coats round every ship's side. Very welcome too to the men must have been

the view of the low hills, with their robe of green sugar-cane and their crown of wind-mills, after a cold and stormy passage of thirty-six days: possibly more welcome still was the glimpse of rum-shops on the foreshore. But flying on one of the line-of-battle ships was the flag of Rear-Admiral Barrington, from whom came at once a stern order that not a man must go ashore, but that all must work their hardest to ship water and stores, and to make good defects. No doubt there was grumbling; no doubt there were longing glances at innocent-looking cocoa-nuts, containing something stronger than milk, which were visible among the vegetables in the negroes' bum-boats. Still fresh meat and bananas were some compensation for the loss of the liquor, and it may be guessed that at least a tot of rum was served out to all at the end of a hard day's work. For within twenty-four hours all was ready: the sick had been landed and the needful stores embarked; and then, without a moment's delay, the anchors were weighed and the sails let fall, and fleet and transports vanished away to leeward before the trade-wind.

Early on the morning of December 13th every soldier on deck was straining his eyes at two little blue mounds which peeped over the horizon far to the south-west. Higher and higher they rose, like two tall sugar-loaves out of the sea, while the lower peaks of a tangled confusion of hills rose likewise on their northern side. The sugar-loaves were the Pitons of St. Lucia, the troops were told, marking the southern end of the island. Then another mass of blue mountains rose to the north-west, which could be no other than Martinique. The fleet now ran round the northern end of St. Lucia, altered its course from west to south and closed in with the

western coast, till all could see the beautiful chaos of lofty volcanic mountains in their heavy mantle of tropical forest. But the officers noticed that one or two of the lower hills were square-topped and had flags flying on them, while from three different headlands there came puffs of white smoke as the fleet passed by, and the round-shot flew skimming over the water, generally falling far short of the ships but twice striking one or two of them. A deep, narrow bay shrinking far into the heart of the hills, with a cluster of houses at its head, attracted every soldier's eye, for they were told that it was Port Castries; but the Admiral held on his course for two miles south of it, when the leading ship suddenly put her helm over, and at two o'clock dropped her anchor in an inlet called Grand Cul de Sac. The rest of the fleet followed, the troops eagerly preparing for disembarkation, and within a very short time the boats were filled with red-coats on their way to the shore.

By five o'clock one brigade of the troops under General Medows was landed complete with arms, accoutrements, and one day's provisions only, and at once began its march, the light companies of the whole force leading the way. The direction of the column was northward, and the only track was a path following the spur of a very steep hill through thick and impenetrable jungle; but the patient soldiers plodded along it in single file for two weary miles in the failing light, when a sputter of musketry in their front made the light infantry dash forward, just in time to see a small party of Frenchmen running for their lives. One of them was caught, but would give no information, except that, though taken, he personally was still unconquered, and that there were plenty of Frenchmen on the island to defend it. It

being now dark the troops bivouacked where they stood, and at daybreak found themselves at the foot of a much higher and steeper hill than that which they had passed, with a party of the enemy awaiting them in their fortifications at the summit. Five more battalions of the British force joined the advanced brigade shortly after daybreak, and the whole then continued their forward movement, with no further molestation than a few shot plunging down from the French cannon above them. The way still led through the same narrow track up an extremely steep ascent, where it would have been easy for a resolute force, however weak, to check them. But on reaching the top, breathless with the long climb in the tropical heat, they met with a flag of truce, and, after the firing of a few shots by some ignorant inhabitants, they received peaceable possession of all the fortifications, with the buildings, stores, and guns within them. The garrison of St. Lucia had evidently not yet arrived in the island; and the Morne Fortuné, for this hill was no other, was thus captured practically without resistance.

From the summit of the height the British looked down on the harbour of Castries Bay beneath them and on the few houses at its head, but saw no sign of cultivation, nothing but range upon range of mountains, even higher than the Morne Fortuné, all covered with jungle, and crowned by a bank of mist which presently broke in a deluge of tropical rain. Medows's brigade then descended the hill to the harbour, marched round the head of it, and without firing a shot took possession of a peninsula called the Vigie, which bounds it on the northern side. Thus the whole of the forts and batteries, mounting in all fifty-nine guns, which protected

Port Castries, fell with their ammunition and stores into the hands of the British; and a fortified harbour was gained, ready made, at the cost of a very few men killed and wounded. All that the army now desired was that the squadron would come in with the baggage, for neither officers nor men had anything except the clothes in which they stood. Towards evening the officers, looking northward towards Martinique, made out twenty-four sail at sea, and were lost in conjecture as to what they might be; but deciding that they must be provision-ships from Barbados, they mentally wished them a good passage and went grumbling to such rest as they could find.

On the following morning, December 15th, the strange fleet came close under the shore and was seen to be that of Count D'Estaing, consisting of twenty-four ships of war, or more than double the number of Barrington's squadron, with fifty or sixty smaller craft evidently full of troops. General Grant in hot haste sent an officer to warn the Admiral in Cul de Sac Bay; but when the messenger arrived he found the whole of the transports packed neatly within the inlet, and the men-of-war anchored in perfect order across the entrance. Barrington had seen the enemy's fleet on the previous evening, and having spent the night in making his dispositions, had retired to rest in a hammock among his ship's company. The aide-de-camp roused him and delivered his message by the hammock's side. "Young man," said the Admiral, drowsily, "I cannot write to the General at present; but tell him that I hope he is as much at ease on shore as I am on board." And with that he laid his head on the pillow and went to sleep again.

In due time the French fleet came up to the entrance of the bay and

very solemnly filed twice past the British squadron keeping up a heavy cannonade at long range, which did no damage whatever beyond the wounding of three men. Then, deciding that he had better leave Barrington alone, D'Estaing beat back to Anse de Choc, a bay immediately to the north of the Vigie peninsula, where his troops were disembarked on the same evening. On the two following days his small craft returned to Martinique to fetch more men, while the French men-of-war tried to make their way into Castries harbour, and to cut off the supply of provisions from the imprisoned fleet in the Cul-de-Sac. But the French engineers had done their work so well when they fortified Port Castries that no ship could approach within effective range of the Vigie; and though boats were easily prevented from bringing provisions from the squadron by day, they passed as easily through the French cruisers by night.

Still the situation of the British was an anxious one, for the defeat of the army would mean that Barrington's squadron would be driven by French guns ashore into the jaws of D'Estaing's fleet, while the defeat of the squadron would deprive the army of its supplies. Moreover the nature of the case had compelled Grant to divide his small force. Four battalions, under Sir Henry Calder, had been left to guard the heights around Cul de Sac Bay to prevent attack upon the transports from the land, and to maintain communication with Morne Fortuné. Five more battalions held Morne Fortuné itself to secure the south shore of Port Castries, while the remaining three under Medows held the peninsula of Vigie. This peninsula presented a strong defensive position, since the approach to it lay across an isthmus little more

than two hundred yards wide at its narrowest point; and Medows had accordingly drawn up the bulk of his force in rear of this neck, with a single advanced post beyond it on the mainland.

The French meanwhile had taken up a position at right angles to Medows's line and not more than two miles distant from it, pushing forwards their picquets until the French sentries could, — and in one case actually did—exchange pinches of snuff with the British. The question was, what were D'Estaing's intentions? What he would have liked, no doubt, would have been for Medows to have withdrawn the whole of his troops in rear of the neck, when he could have left a sufficient force to hold him in check, and marched round the head of the harbour with the remainder to attack Morne Fortuné; but Medows had been careful, as we have seen, to preserve egress from the peninsula by means of an advanced post. There remained, therefore, one of two alternatives,—to leave a force to contain that of Medows, and to move the bulk of the French troops to Cul de Sac Bay, so as to overwhelm Calder, or to make an end of Medows, if possible, at a single stroke. A clue to D'Estaing's designs was obtained on the evening of the 17th, when a French deserter came into Vigie with the news that the French were so posted as to isolate the brigade on the peninsula completely, and that they intended to attack it forthwith with twelve thousand men. Medows's officers shrugged their shoulders at a mere deserter's story, but, reflecting on the tried excellence and long experience of their own men, rather hoped that it might be true.

Indeed the brigade occupying Vigie, though mustering but thirteen hundred men, was of no ordinary quality.

It consisted of the 5th, now known as the Northumberland Fusiliers, and the grenadier companies and light companies of the 4th, 15th, 27th, 28th, 35th, 40th, 46th, and 55th, massed into a grenadier battalion and a light infantry battalion as was the fashion of the day. The flank-companies, as they were called, were the finest men of their regiments, and the regiments in themselves were composed of no common soldiers. Most of them had been engaged at Bunker's Hill, and every one of them in the victorious actions of Brooklyn, Fort Washington, and Brandywine. The commander of this detachment, too, Colonel Medows, had served in Germany under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, and had fought through most of the American war; while he was by nature not only a good and daring soldier, but a man of so buoyant a temper and so cheerful a wit that no one could feel discouraged in his presence. His epigrams enlivened more than one storming-party afterwards in India, and on one occasion he actually averted a panic by a timely jest.

Throughout the night of the 17th the rain fell heavily, continuing until seven o'clock in the morning, when it was observed that the French were nearer to the British advanced posts than usual, and in greater numbers. The main position of the British, in rear of the neck of the peninsula, lay on the slope of a low rugged hill, the foot of which was covered with scrub. Outside the neck, the advanced post of five companies of light infantry was stationed upon two low hills; and this was the point which appeared to be threatened by the enemy. General Medows and two of his battalion-commanders went down to it to see what might be going forward; when to their horror the officers in the rear of the neck saw two strong French

battalions emerge suddenly from a belt of low brushwood along the beach, and move up against the front and flank of the light infantry as if to cut them off. It was an awkward moment, for the General seemed to be in danger of being cut off also, and, in the absence of orders, many doubted whether the main body ought not to advance in order to rescue their comrades. But presently Medows came back perfectly cool and composed. "The light infantry will take care of themselves," he said; "as for you, stand fast."

The light infantry did take care of themselves, for they had learned some useful lessons in America. Advancing in skirmishing order, and keeping themselves always under cover, they maintained at close range a most destructive fire upon the heavy French columns. If the French attempted to extend, they threatened a charge with the bayonet; when the French closed up, they were themselves already extended and pouring in a galling fire; when the French advanced with solidity and determination, they retired as if beaten and disappeared, but only to renew their fire, invisible themselves, from every direction. But when at last one of the French battalions gave way, they followed them and completed the rout with the bayonet. Meanwhile the rest of the French army came up slowly in solid columns to the attack of the main position, unobserved by the light infantry who were returning to the defence of their advanced post. "Come back, come back," yelled their comrades and the grenadiers from behind the neck; but the light companies would not hear, until regaining the slope they saw their danger, and dashed into the scrub to join the main body. They made their escape in safety, thanks in part to the den-

sity of the brushwood, but thanks above all to Captain Downing, Lieutenant Waring, and Privates Rose, Duffy, and Hargrove of the 55th, who stood alone and unaided in a narrow path to cover their retreat. These five gallant fellows parried the bayonet-thrusts for long until Waring was run through the body, and Downing was on the point of sharing his fate, when a French officer stepped forward and touched his sword with a significant gesture. There was no resisting so chivalrous an appeal, and Downing with his three companions surrendered.

The French now developed their attack upon the main position, filling the scrub near the foot of the hill with their light troops, while their battalions in massive columns continued their slow and steady advance. The British field-guns (four three-pounders) now opened fire, quickly silencing the still lighter pieces of the French; and the grenadiers, who were fast dropping under the bullets of the enemy's sharp-shooters, likewise began their fire, in perfect order and without confusion, husbanding every cartridge, for they had but thirty rounds a man. Meanwhile the French columns never fired a shot, though whole ranks of them were swept away by the British cannon. They endured the punishment with all the bravery of their nation, but made no progress, though they kept changing direction to right and left as if looking for the easiest way to ascend the hill. One of them broke twice and was twice rallied, until at last they all came to a dead halt, still within range of the British, and there like helpless images they stood or fell.

Meanwhile the British on their side were falling fast, and ammunition began to fail. The French, too, brought forward fresh battalions as if determined to carry the position;

and Medows gave the order to cease fire until the enemy came within very close range, when the troops should retire under the smoke of their volleys to the summit of the hill, form line, and charge with the bayonet. The British musketry fell silent accordingly, and the men, reserving five rounds a piece, sat down and endured the enemy's fire; but still the French did not advance. Fresh ammunition from the magazine on Morne Fortuné was presently brought across the harbour in a boat, and on the reopening of the British fire the French retired in confusion. The fight had lasted for three hours, from eight until eleven o'clock in the morning.

The casualties of the British did not exceed one hundred and seventy-one, of whom thirteen only were killed; the grenadiers losing close upon ninety officers and men and the light infantry over sixty. Medows himself was wounded early in the day, but never left the field for a moment; and when the action was over he visited every wounded officer and man before he would receive the surgeon's attention himself. His epigrammatic soul had been greatly cheered by an answer returned to him by a young subaltern, Lieutenant Gomm of the 46th, who in the heat of the action was wounded in the eye. "I hope that you have not lost your eye, sir," said the General. "I believe I have, sir," replied Gomm, "but with the other I shall see you victorious this day." Meanwhile the unwounded officers made their way to the neck where the French columns had stood, and came upon a scene which turned them sick. The white-coats, hideously stained, lay thick upon the ground, over four hundred men being killed outright, and twelve hundred grievously wounded. Very soon every British soldier who could be spared was ministering to the poor fellows,

and some of the officers were for burying the dead; but here Medows interposed, saying that the French must do that for themselves. So a flag of truce was sent to Count D'Estaing accompanied by a bugle-horn, which having been at first fired upon (since the French were not aware that the bugle had already begun to replace the drum) was courteously received and dismissed. Four hundred Frenchmen came down to inter their dead, but after six hours had not finished their work, which our men were fain to complete for themselves.

Even so, however, D'Estaing did not wholly abandon the hope of expelling the British. On the day following the action he sent thirty transports full of troops to the south of Cul de Sac, where they landed with the intention of seizing some heights that overlooked the bay, erecting mortar-batteries on them and bombarding the transports that were crowded together in the inlet. But Sir Henry Calder speedily detached some of the 35th and 40th to seize the heights, and the French, finding themselves forestalled, would not hazard another attack. The attempt was therefore abandoned, and after a week more of sullen delay D'Estaing, on December 28th, returned with his ships and the remains of his army to Martinique. The few French posts that still remained then hauled down their flags; and on January 6th Admiral Byron, having been delayed by storms,—the usual luck of Foul-weather Jack, as the men called him—arrived with his fleet, securing to the British the possession of St. Lucia.

Thus closed an extremely remarkable little campaign, one of the few of which it may truly be said that the whole issue turned upon twenty-four hours of time. Had Barrington

delayed for one day longer at Barbados, his squadron and transports must have fallen a prey to D'Estaing's far superior fleet. Even then, had Grant waited till next dawn instead of landing his troops and beginning his march in the dusk of the evening, the French militia with their small nucleus of regular troops might have held Morne Fortune until D'Estaing came to their relief. The island once occupied and D'Estaing fairly on the spot, it remained for the British commanders by land and sea to play their parts to perfection, for the defeat of either meant disaster to both. Yet so admirable were the dispositions not only of Barrington and Grant, but of Grant's brigadiers, Calder and Medows, that D'Estaing was driven back with shame and with heavy loss to Martinique.

The action on the Vigie is also notable in itself, being the first example of the employment of the new British tactics, learned in America, against the old system favoured in Europe. The French were puzzled beyond measure by the work of the British light infantry. They had *chasseurs* of their own, but these were never supposed to make any serious resistance, whereas five companies of British *chasseurs* had made havoc of two battalions which outnumbered them by four to one, not only by defence but by counter-attack. Beyond all question Medows relied not a little on the moral effect of these new tactics upon troops trained in an older school, for the maintenance of these five companies in their isolated position was obviously an extremely hazardous step. Yet he took that step deliberately, and he was fully justified by success. Every officer and man of his force knew what to do, and did it; whereas the French, though they stood bravely enough, were absolutely at a loss. In fact

the behaviour of Medows's battalions was exactly that of the famous Light Division in its palmiest days; thus confirming the forgotten fact that Moore's reforms in tactics were built on the experience of America.

For the rest, St. Lucia remained in British hands until the close of the war, with the most important results. Grant, an excellent officer with the greatest admiration for the Navy, perceived its value at once. "We are here, in a way looking into Fort Royal," he wrote,—at the very gate, in other words, of the chief French naval station to windward—and he resolved that such a station should not easily be lost. Lord George Germaine who, for the sins of England, was acting at this time as her Minister of War, wished to disperse the garrison over the neighbouring British islands; but Grant absolutely refused to do so. Three of the islands were indeed taken by the French, but Grant declined to accept the blame for these mishaps, retorting upon this insolent Secretary of State that it was his lordship's own fault if islands were captured, since this could never have happened unless the British had been of inferior strength at sea. The mortality among the troops in St. Lucia was indeed terrible, until in 1780 a hurricane, by laying the whole of the forest low, improved the climate amazingly. But healthy or unhealthy the island was securely held, though the French made more than one attempt to retake it; and in 1782 its value was proved to the full.

The next inlet to the north of Anse du Choc is known as Gros Islet Bay, deriving its name from a rocky islet, called by the British Pigeon Island. It is a desolate,

barren hillock, strewn with the bones of whales and honeycombed by disused tanks and the foundations of ruined store-houses and magazines. Once it was garrisoned, and still it is an historic spot. In this bay for many weeks in the spring of 1782 lay Admiral Rodney's fleet, while a chain of frigates connected him by signal with the ships that watched the French fleet some fifty miles to northward in its safe harbour at Martinique; and on this Pigeon Island, it is said, the great admiral used to take his stand, day after day, with his glass under his arm, watching for the signal that the French would sail,—"in a way looking into Fort Royal," as Grant said. On April 8th the long-awaited signal fluttered down the line of frigates, and the fleet weighed anchor, to win, on the 12th, the Battle of the Saints and thereby to assure the confederated enemies of England, whether foreign or rebel, that she had still the power to make them tremble.

St. Lucia was restored to the French by the peace of 1783, and reconquered after a far more arduous struggle by Abercromby and Moore in 1795, to pass finally into our possession by the Peace of Paris in 1814. It is now what it was designed to be in 1778, our principal naval station to windward; and it may be therefore that the old fortifications on Morne Fortune have within recent years been swept away. But Pigeon Island remains, and probably there are few admirals on the West Indian Station who do not pay it a visit, in order (to use the words of one whom I was myself privileged to accompany) "to stand where old Rodney stood before he went out to lick the French."

J. W. FORTESCUE.

PRIMROSE-DAY.

PRIMROSE DAY, and all the streets
 With a borrowed gold are gay,
 Honeyed are with borrowed sweets.
 Everywhere the vision meets
 Hints and glints of country places ;
 Hollows full of crumpling fern,
 Whispers of a hurrying burn,
 And a skylark far above
 Chanting Godwards laud and love ;
 Fields of daisies, bluebell-sheets,—
 All these lovelinesses rise
 Clear before the glamoured eyes
 Looking in these primrose faces.

Wonderful it is to see
 Their delicious wizardry :
 How with petals soft and cold
 They have wrought on heart and brain,
 Till the clock turns back again,
 And we see with eyes washed clear
 From the film of day and year.
 We are young that had grown old
 Chasing Hope and finding Fear :
 We are young, and we believe
 Both in Eden and in Eve :
 Fairyland to us is free
 By the rainbow's golden key.
 While we wear these yellow flowers
 Youth and Memory are ours ;
 Though to-morrow we shall be
 Left alone with Memory.

ART AND LIFE.

WHAT about Bohemia? Is it perhaps as mythical as Shakespeare's fabled country by the sea, or as obsolete as the nationality of the people from whom it takes its name? What is it, where is it, and above all why is it? Is there any occasion or excuse for it? Is it a vital part of the artistic life or only an excrescence on it, the cradle or the grave of genius? In short, what is the bearing of a man's life upon his work, and how far is it necessary or to be desired, either in the interests of the man or of his work, that he should adopt a life in some degree peculiar to his calling? These are the questions it is here proposed to discuss, and from a point of view midway between the extremes of prejudice, from a standpoint, that is to say, as remote from the orthodoxy which is shocked at the Bohemianism that does not wear a tall silk hat in town as from the unorthodoxy that would think it Philistine to neglect any opportunity of outraging public opinion.

There is a fantastic idea of the artistic life which is no doubt mythical; but even for that there was a foundation: the very myth which has grown about it really goes to prove the existence of Bohemia. Nor is it by any means extinct, though its shores shift so with the tide of fashion that it is impossible to fix them with precision.

Bohemianism is as old as vagrancy; Homer has been claimed as a Bohemian; but the term in its modern sense is relatively modern. Balzac may be said to have given it currency by the publication of *UN PRINCE DE*

BOHÈME in 1840; and soon after that Henri Murger threw the country open, so to speak, in the famous *SCÈNES DE LA VIE DE BOHÈME*. These godfathers of the vague domain were of opinion that Bohemia existed only, and could only exist, in Paris: one of them located it definitely in the Boulevard des Italiens; but they both lived (like many another Parisian) in a world which did not extend far beyond the banks of the Seine. The truth is that, though there may be something racial in the tendency towards it, it stands for no nation but for a phase of life. The Bohemia of Balzac and Murger is naturally not that of Thackeray and Robertson, but, wherever there is society, upon its outskirts lies Bohemia. To the born Bohemian all the world is Bohemia, and Bohemia all the world. As one of its poets has sung:

Though the latitude's rather uncertain,
The longitude equally vague,
That person I pity who knows not the
city,
The beautiful city of Prague.

And what is this Bohemian existence? It differs, of course, in different localities, and in the same locality it changes from generation to generation; but it follows always a direction somewhat apart from the current of accepted conventions. It arises perhaps out of a certain shyness of society,—*sauvage* is the French epithet—which, whether or not characteristic of the Red Indian, is a distinguishing instinct of certain of us who find it necessary to full artistic activity to live a life some-

what apart. The Savage of the twentieth century lives and orders his life quite otherwise than the men who founded, for example, the Savage Club. In dress and bearing he is irreproachable, he is far from affecting the dishevelled, he has long since abandoned the Owls' Nest, he has been known to entertain Royalty; he may be himself a Lord Chief Justice; but at heart he is, or was (or else he is an impostor) a rebel against convention, vowed to go his own way, lead his own life, the life of freedom necessary to his nature and to the exercise of his calling.

The name of Bohemian calls to mind the wandering gipsy life; and there is a race of artists temperamentally of the tribe of the Zingari, passionate lovers of nature, vagabond of mind if not of body, with a dash perhaps of the mountebank or itinerant showman in them, though it is only with words and colours that they juggle; some there are who never get beyond their *Wander-Jahr*, never settle down to steady work,—the strolling players at art, they might be called—but Bohemians are not, as the name might be taken to imply, nomadic; they live even too narrowly within the confines of the artistic *milieu*. That is what they seek, that is the vindication of their fraternity. Their revolt against Philistia may be of the mildest. The frame of mind which in the Middle Ages led bookish men to seek shelter in the cloister, where, amid surroundings comparatively propitious and society not uncongenial, it was possible to pursue in peace their learned or artistic vocation, brings them nowadays sooner or later to Bohemia,—for a time at least, until perhaps the path of matrimony lures them away. The attitude of the Bohemian may be something short of active rebellion against convention; strictly speaking it need not amount

to more than non-conformity,—about the last word by which he would himself describe it.

Convention is the measure of common convenience; and great is the convenience of conformity. We are tempted, if only to avoid the wear and tear of existence, tamely to agree in word and deed with whatever may be currently accepted. But what if, in the case of the artistic temperament, the endeavour to conform should result only in continual friction? It is in order to avoid daily and hourly friction that the artist once for all declines to conform. Convenience in his case consists in conforming to a rule of life framed with a view to artistic needs, not social considerations.

“Great men,” said Balzac, “belong to their works.” The artist may be too ready to take himself for a great man, but, great or small, he belongs to his work. The way an artist lives is his affair. The hours he works, what time he goes to bed or gets up in the morning, the fashion of his clothes, the society he frequents, the amusements of his idle hours, concern himself alone; and him they concern more deeply than is always understood. He has, for one thing, to keep clear of much which, natural as it may be to others, would be to him fruitless expenditure. The habits of Philistia, based as they are upon the ways and wants of the well-to-do, may or may not be adapted to the needs of business and professional men; they do not in the least meet those of the artist. We hear of high prices given for works of art (especially when once the artist is safely dead and does not benefit thereby), but artists find it as a rule difficult enough to pay their way, and they are acting only in self-defence when they refuse to spend upon what is not merely unnecessary, but would

be no luxury to them if they had it, the hard-earned money they can so much better lay out in things which, luxuries though they might be to others, are necessities to them ; in books, for example, travel, rest, recreation, and all manner of what may seem extravagance but is really not merely helpful but essential to their craft. It is only on condition of a sort of selfishness,—at all events it is sure to be called selfishness—that a man whose work is individual does his best. And in repudiating those conventions of society which hinder him in doing it he is acting in the general interest no less than in his own. In his case duty to society consists in doing good work, not in conforming to its ways,—even were that possible, which to him it may not be. His endeavour to do as others do seldom results in anything worth doing.

Our work is only partly ours. In part it is the result of circumstances, and very especially of our surroundings. We must take art as it is, with all the sensibility and supersensitiveness of the artist. It is quite certain that talents which in the sunshine of sympathy would blossom freely are nipped long before appreciation falls to zero ; and it is in pursuit of the equable temperature conducive to productiveness in him, that the artist gravitates towards Bohemia, establishes perchance his own Bohemia, gathering to him others of his kind. For want of some such haven the village poet is driven to seek the half-congenial shelter of the ale-house. It is only by rare exception that a man like Anthony Trollope can ply his craft with the regularity of a man of business, can lead the life of everybody and do his own work at the same time ; and the phenomenon of an author putting his art into words at the rate of so

many an hour for so many hours every day, is probably to be accounted for by the rather prosaic character of his particular art. Mr. Andrew Lang once likened himself (as compared with the wilder singing-bird) to "a punctual domesticated barndoors-fowl laying its daily 'article' for the breakfast-table of the citizen"—that same *bourgeois*, by the way, whom the artist affects so to despise ; but even the tame hen resents being cooped up.

It was Hamerton, I think, who said that an artist wants to wake up in the morning with the feeling that the day before him is all his, that he may give it to his work, and not be called off by social or other claims conflicting with it. It is because he finds it impossible to reconcile the ordinary way of life with devotion to his art, that he rebels against it. His intuition that the life of everyone is not the life for him argues no vice or weakness in him. That is very clearly seen in the case of Wordsworth, whose "plain living and high thinking" may be cited as a noble form of Bohemianism, an artist's protest against the rich living and low thinking of Philistia, a flat refusal to fall in with ways of life which meant nothing to him, as compared with his life's work. Thoreau again, seeking in the woods of Walden the atmosphere in which he could best work, stands for a gipsy-like but still gentle Bohemian, more at home in the solitude of Nature than in the society of men. The more typical form of Bohemian is illustrated in Walt Whitman, aggressively rebellious, so fearful indeed of being influenced by custom and convention as to make something of a parade of going counter to them. A rebel is obliged sometimes in self-defence to attack, to carry war into the country of an enemy who will not

leave him in peace. It is not mere bravado which makes a man proclaim his creed. Call him by a name to which some odium is attached, and, if he cannot shake it off, he will glory in it, just to show he is not ashamed of himself. For all that, too loud a boast of independence is not the surest proof of strong personality ; ideas are none the less new or true for being expressed with due regard to the feelings and prejudices of others. An artist has not only to attract an audience but to keep it, and at times even to convert it.

A certain surliness in the attitude of an artist towards society may be accounted for by its seeming to hold out to him the promise of position or wealth, a bait which his artistic conscience warns him not to swallow. He has been known, of course, before now to take himself too seriously, and society may well disregard pretensions not warranted by work done, but it owes some attention to the protest of a man like Michel Angelo. "The world," he said, "forgets that the really zealous artist is in duty bound to abstain from the idle trivialities and current compliments of society, not because he is high and mighty or disdainful, but because his art imperatively claims his energy, all of it. If he had leisure equal to the rest of the world, the rest of the world might expect him to observe its rules of etiquette or ceremony. As it is they seek his society for their own honour and glory, and they must put up with his crotchets." That may be savage, but there is no denying the truth of it.

The artist, then, goes his own way, contrary as it may be to the neatly ordered paths of Philistia, no matter who may resent it. Resentment is partly owing to misunderstanding. The steady-going citizen is shocked by the artist's irregularity, the fitfulness

of his industry, not realising (how should he realise?) that this is not in him the vice it would be in a banker or his clerk. Pictures are not painted, nor statues modelled, nor poems written, with the regularity with which a man of business casts up accounts or answers letters. An artist's best work is done, not at fixed intervals, but when the fit is on him ; and, short of making his moods an excuse for shirking work, he is not only justified in following them, but bound in economic prudence to do so. The artist may be a bit of an idler, but he is not always so idle as more regular workers may think. He works, when the fit is on him, at a pressure greatly beyond that of regular routine. There follow periods of exhaustion when it is his best wisdom to desist from work.

Hast in der bösen Stund geruht,
Ist dir die gute doppelt gut.¹

So wrote Goethe, and he was no idler. And then, remember, the artist whose heart is in what he is doing never gets quite free from it, is never so idle as the man whose work is a task from which it is a holiday to escape. An artist obeys and must obey his impulse, happy if it should not carry him too far. The peculiar temperament which is one of the conditions, if not the one condition, on which he holds his creative faculty, is not an unqualified blessing. Often it leads him astray. It is largely responsible for his irresponsibility, for the curious dulness of his common-sense, for his characteristic unfitness for the business of life. And his way of living, the way necessary it may be to his development on the artistic side, does nothing to correct the warp on the other, does not discourage

1 Rest always in the evil hour;
So shall you work with double power.

waywardness, nor develope habits of caution, method, punctuality, and so forth, which (though he can afford to do without the to him intolerable routine so necessary to the conduct of more matter-of-fact affairs) are in some sort indispensable to great achievement in art.

The badge of all our tribe is wilfulness ; but some at least of our apparent unreasonableness is, in strict truth, a most rational protest against the exorbitant demands commonly made upon conformity. That a man is proof against distractions which, while affording him no satisfaction, would yet hinder him in his work, that he denies himself what he does not in the least value in order to make sure of what he treasures, that he lives simply so as to be able to work sincerely,—is surely neither wayward nor wilful but the perfection of sweet reasonableness.

Plainly, then, the artist's life is not a myth, and the necessity for it is not extinct ; and in so far as man, and least of all the artist, is (with the exception of here and there an anchorite) not a solitary animal, the aggregation of artists into communities in which they may rely upon the sympathy, the criticism, the incentive of fellow-workers,—Bohemia, in short,—is not merely justified ; it is inevitable.

We pride ourselves upon our individuality, but absolutely independent we are not. The least sympathetic of us reflect the colour of our surroundings : here and there a man like Charles Kingsley seems to owe almost everything to his environment at the critical moment of his life ; but it tells upon us all. Polite society makes the artist something of a man of fashion, just as the companionship of fellow artists kindles and strengthens in him the spirit which produces.

No. 510.—VOL. LXXXV.

The artist, then, is fully justified in leading the life which suits him. Adherence to custom being in the main a matter of convenience, it is no credit to a man that it suits his purpose to conform, no discredit that it does not. He needs no excuse for a very wide departure from the conventions others may have accepted. The misfortune is that in the atmosphere of Bohemia the foibles of the artist have full play, equally with his faculties, and thrive, as it proves, so abnormally, that the plea of the artistic life is made to cover a multitude of sins,—some of them venial, some not.

The final verdict upon Bohemianism must depend very much upon what is understood by it. We must distinguish between its phases. In one of them it has made itself sufficiently ridiculous. Young art is prone to offer up incense at the shrine of its own genius, and the fumes get into its silly head. It is not so much Bohemianism as youthful vanity which makes one budding poet vie with another as to which shall sport the most outrageous headgear, and, if need be, refer the matter to the solemn arbitration of a third genius. But the atmosphere has something to do with inflaming such youthful vanity. It has something to do with the state of mind in which a young gentleman can dye his hair crimson and, in a yellow waistcoat, knee-breeches, and a Scotch cap, disport himself in the Luxembourg Gardens ; and makes possible the otherwise impossible point of view of his friends of the Chat Noir who were not only indignant at his getting locked up but astonished.

To the childish vanity of dressing-up has succeeded the determination not, if possible, to be taken for an artist ; of which two forms of affectation (vain-glorious assertion of one's calling, and denying it) the more

ridiculous is the less insincere. In either case it is self-consciousness which is to blame, a vanity which will not allow a man to go about his business without always thinking what sort of a figure he cuts. Art outgrows one affectation after another, but not the vanity which gives rise to them successively. A lasting conceit is that which affects to be apart, strange, unnatural, exotic, none too moral, and prides itself upon a foolish artificiality. The pose of youthful genius has been very happily hit off by the distinguished critic, Jules Lemaître.

To-day certain young literary men form a fresh variety of the human race; they take themselves more seriously than priests, philosophers, or politicians. At about the age of twenty the malady gets hold of them. They begin by believing with the narrowest and most fanatical faith that literature is the noblest of human callings, the only one possible to them (all others being below their notice) and that it is really *they* who invented literature. Then they make cliques of three or two or even one. They seek painfully the most outrageous forms of expression. They are more *naturaliste* than Zola, more impressionist than the de Goncourts, more grotesquely mystic than Poe or Beaudelaire. They invent the "art of the decadence," and what not. The comparatively modest among them think they have discovered psychology, and talk of nothing else. Formerly at the age of twenty we knew how to admire, we had some respect for our masters, we had a naïve affection for them,—Lamartine, Hugo, Musset and the rest—even Augier and Dumas inspired us with some consideration. But the arrogance of the new elite is unbounded. The youngsters take dislikes as arbitrary as their fancies, and their dislikes are as numerous as their admirations are rare. They hate and despise whatever is not like themselves. Knowing nothing they have a stupid and stubborn contempt for the sublimest genius or the most marvellous talent so soon as it is recognised. What with their intolerance and egotism, it is as difficult to talk to them as to a Dervish or a Thug. They are neither Christians nor citizens,

nor friends, nor perhaps so much as men—they are literary—each with his peculiar creed, in which he perhaps alone believes, which he alone understands, if he does understand it.

M. Lemaître is speaking only of the literary exclusive, but his words have a general application to other artists, and not of his country alone. The French are by race less reticent than we, though we too are fast learning to exhibit ourselves without the disguise of costume. We should not have far to look for English parallels to Beaudelaire ransacking the dictionary for strange words with which to flavour his style, or to Théophile Gautier professing, in his rage for form, to prefer the picturesque atrocities of the worst of Roman Emperors to the clean life of the best of French citizens, out of which there was no artistic capital to be made. It is surely the *virus* of Parisian perversity working upon a smart English writer which makes him try and startle us by pointing, paradoxically, to M. Emile Zola as a "striking instance of the insanity of common-sense." The insincerity of the author of such topsy-turvydom is obvious; his one thought is plainly "to make the Philistine sit up" as he would say,—a common foible of the Bohemian, but for the most part a mere waste of fireworks. It is a distinguishing feature of the Philistine that he takes no notice of the class whose fond ambition it is to astound him, even if he is so much as aware of its existence. He neither sits up nor jumps out of his skin, but goes quietly about his business, as though the startling picture had not been painted, the shocking story not told,—and for the simple reason that it never comes to his knowledge. It is only human to take a rather perverse delight in shocking the straight-laced, more especially if we can flatter

ourselves that the unorthodox thing wants to be said or ought to be done ; but the justification of unorthodoxy, and especially of protesting it aloud, is absolute sincerity, and much of the more wilfully original art of our day falls lamentably short of that. "What does it all mean ?" said one city man to another,—they were standing before a very extreme picture at a London exhibition. "Mean ?" said the other. "Why, it means you don't know anything about it, *but I do.*"

A serious set-off against the impulse and encouragement of sympathetic and appreciative society are the pretensions awakened by the over-appreciation of critics whose horizon does not extend beyond the confines of Bohemia. The thorough-paced Bohemian will go so far as to pride himself upon his failure ; it argues him too good to be appreciated. If by chance another should achieve distinction (this argument never applies to oneself), if the Philistine should, instead of opening his eyes in wonder, open his purse and buy the work of a Bohemian, why, then it can't be as good as the thorough-goer thought ; the author is in fact suspect, perhaps after all a Philistine in disguise.

The contemptuous assumption that the prosperity of an artist is the ruin of his art is less inexcusable. There is a quality of undeniable genius which appears quickly to parch in the atmosphere of social success. It is a fact (though envy may quicken the perception of it) that there is something goes to success in art which is not art, which may be developed at the expense of art, and in the end extinguish it. When a man is coining money he is probably not doing all he might have done. Bohemian contempt for success is not all assumed. It was quite fair banter, and not jealousy on the part of

Coppée's Donadieu, when he complained laughingly of his old friend, that he dared not blow his nose till sundown, because to drop his palette and take out his pocket-handkerchief was equivalent to the loss of a louis,—his last cold in the head cost him three thousand francs.

Success, as it is called, does not sit lightly upon the artist. It may prove a veritable old man of the sea upon his shoulders. His real success, of course, is in finding full expression of what he had to say, his true pride is in his work, and Bohemia fosters in him that proper pride, together with some pride of which the propriety is less obvious. It encourages him not merely to value art at its full worth but himself, as its exponent, at something more. Unfortunately for him, the feeling for art does not in the least imply a corresponding faculty. There are many more called than will ever be chosen, and some, who make sure of their vocation, hear only the voice of their own desire to be artists. Bohemia is haunted by these victims of an illusion which grows with each fresh disappointment only more stubborn, these dreamers of dreams never by any chance to come true. There, too, are other "ghosts" and "devils," hacks, and unknown artists who never will be known—who have nothing to expect from Fortune, for she does not so much as know their address, and they are careful not to give it, resigning thus their right to complain. There is nothing for the irreconcilables who are prepared to make no concession but to fight it out, and, when worsted, to accept defeat. Heroic submission is the only justification of what is else a pretence or a pose.

It is not proper pride but vanity which bids a man expect the world (in answer to his outspoken contempt

for it) to come and thrust a pedestal under his unwilling feet. Proper pride would urge him to earn his livelihood at no matter what honest trade, so he might be free in his uninspired moments to work according to his inspiration. Such moments are not so many that they would greatly interfere with the year's work. Genius itself is most of the time not fit for much more than plain journey-work.

Genius or journeyman, a worker must be the best judge of the way of living which suits his work. Who else can know the circumstances of his particular case? Let him live accordingly; and, though his manner of life seem to us eccentric or unorthodox, it is justified, as the expression of individual liberty, the assertion of a right to go one's own way. It is the pose of unorthodoxy which is so childish, a defect of that quality of youthfulness which is part of the artistic nature. That eternal youthfulness of the artist makes him the rebel that he is against the conventions of society. But rebellion works itself out. Reiterated protest becomes at last a trick of speech, repeated action falls into attitude, nonconformity becomes a pose, and, cruel irony! Bohemianism itself crystallises at last into neither more nor less than a new convention.

There is one theory of the artistic life which, sanely speaking, is not tenable,—the theory of the artist's immunity from the duties of manhood and good citizenship. Irresponsible he is no doubt, in the sense that he does not recognise his responsibilities; but that does not absolve him from them. The prevalence of this incurable irresponsibility among artists seems almost to argue some insanity of the artistic nature or some depravity in the artistic life. How else are we to account for the strange

perversion of the moral sense which makes it easier for a Burns to borrow than to accept money for the "efforts of his muse," and leads his artistic eulogist to find this "noble with the nobility of the Viking"? The Viking, no doubt, was unhampered by any very rigid ideas as to property or the means of acquiring it; but why noble? Another typical instance of perverted pride is that of a certain needy (one cannot say struggling) artist, to whom Canova sent the price of a study; his first thought was to send it back; but he eventually swallowed his resentment and stood treat at the inn till the money was all spent.

The boast of irresponsibility, on the part of men, some of whom at least were not without great gifts, has almost persuaded us to mistake it for a sign of genius. And they have a charming way with them sometimes. Who does not prefer "Dick Steele with all his faults to Addison with all his essays"? But the assumption that he was the better artist because as a man he could not hold himself in hand, is worse than foolish. Pope was a far better artist, and a typical one, pursuing, it might be said, "art for art's sake" before ever the phrase was invented; and yet, so far from sacrificing to it anything of manly independence, he earned the wherewithal to live, and, having earned it, regarded it, to quote the words of Mr. Leslie Stephen, "as a retaining fee, not a discharge from his duties as an artist." That is not the Bohemian ideal of maintaining "a poet's dignity," but it is one to which Goethe and Shakespeare could have subscribed.

An artist, it is said, must obey his temperament. He should at any rate not be its slave. It is too much to say that even genius is at liberty to do no matter what, and the world is to be thankful. Temperament is but

a poor excuse for a life at best much less effective than it should have been. The artist is not to be judged too harshly. His temperament exposes him possibly to more than ordinary temptation. The conditions of his life may not be of the healthiest and most bracing. It is quite possible that there is something abnormal in art, some insanity in genius. At least the artist is endowed with a nervous system liable from its very delicacy to get out of order; and the exhaustion of his nerve-power, consequent upon the high pressure at which his best work is done, weakens perhaps his powers of defence just at the point where moral sense is open to attack.

The artist, therefore, who gives way to his weakness may plead the artistic temperament as an extenuating circumstance; but he is clearly guilty, and to claim any sort of artistic irresponsibility is something less than manly. It is not contended that artists lead less decent lives than the rest of the world, though they may take less pains to hide their lapses than some to whom respectability is a part of their stock in trade, but only that the plea of the artistic life is no justification of ill-living. The personal convenience of the artist (art is essentially personal) excuses nothing contrary to the general good. An artist is not exempt from the obligations of citizenship; and if the Bohemian's contempt for the Philistine implies that he is, then his taunt of Philistinism recoils upon himself. The claims of art and of life may not always be easy to adjust; but they are usually adjustable. If, peradventure, they should clash, it is not a case in which a man's judgment should desert him, nor an artist's sense of proportion. It is only an overweening esteem of the importance of art, or of his own importance,

which, when it comes, for example, to a choice between art and morals, can blind a responsible being to his plain duty, or prevent him from perceiving that here is the occasion for the man to come to the front, and not slink behind the artist. Grant all the claims of art upon the artist, and suppose (what is by no means granted) that right conduct were contrary to the interests of art,—why, then, the artist would be called upon to risk his art, as men are called upon to risk their lives; and it would be nothing less than cowardice to hold back. There is a point of view from which a man of any principle, or self-restraint, or good repute, is thought to be quite lost to art. Art, it is contended, has nothing to do with morals. Your every impulse must run away with you, or it is a sign you have no passion, no temperament. To study seriously, to take a degree, to marry fairly, to earn your living, pay your rent, keep decent company,—what is that but to confess, in acts each one more Philistine than the other, that you are not an artist? Art thrives upon disorder! It is spontaneous, free, the overflow of genius and originality! Was ever such perversity! The Philistine, it is true, is no judge of art; but of its wholesomeness Brown, Jones, or Robinson, is a better judge than Rossetti or de Maupassant.

The excesses of Bohemia being what they are, no wonder it is a terror to the timid and a scandal to the conventional. Yet there is in sober truth no just reason why its inhabitants should not be as sternly steadfast to a high purpose as the great Bohemian reformer Huss himself, as brave in defence of true artistic individuality as the little body of Bohemian patriots who made their gallant stand for nationality and freedom. The Bohemianism

worthy of respect is not a pose but a stand against oppression, a severance from social orthodoxy, necessary to the devoted pursuit of an artistic ideal. Whether art is worth the sacrifice is a question men will answer according to their appreciation of art. To the artist what he gives up is no sacrifice, and, were it ten times a sacrifice, it is the price at which he saves his soul alive. And yet perhaps he pays more dearly than he knows. There is a sacrifice to which he hardly gives heed enough. Too absolute detachment from the affairs of

life does cost him something. Living exclusively in the world of art, in his dreams and among dreamers like himself, he loses hold upon the realities. Engrossed in art, he is apt to let pass the duties of good citizenship, and not seriously to heed the world and what is going on in it. An artist is doomed in any case to an outlook through the spectacles of art; but a real man should at least look things in the face, and take God's world for almost as serious as his own creations.

LEWIS F. DAY.

ODE TO JAPAN.

CLASP hands across the world,
 Across the dim sea-line,
 Where with bright flags unfurled
 Our navies breast the brine ;
 Be this our plighted union blest,
 Oh ocean-throned empires of the East and West !

Here, rich with old delays,
 Our ripening freedom grows,
 As through the unhasting days
 Unfolds the lingering rose ;
 Through sun-fed calm, through smiting shower,
 Slow from the pointed bud outbreaks the full-orbed flower.

But yours,—how long the sleep,
 How swift the awakening came !
 As on your snow-fields steep
 The suns of summer flame ;
 At morn the aching channels glare ;
 At eve the rippling streams leap on the ridged stair.

'Twas yours to dream, to rest,
 Self-centred, mute, apart,
 While out beyond the West
 Strong beat the world's wild heart ;
 Then in one rapturous hour to rise,
 A giant fresh from sleep, and clasp the garnered prize !

Here, from this English lawn
 Ringed round with ancient trees,
 My spirit seeks the dawn
 Across the Orient seas.
 While dark the lengthening shadows grow,
 I paint the land unknown, which yet in dreams I know.

Far up among the hills
 The scarlet bridges gleam,
 Across the crystal rills
 That feed the plunging stream ;
 The forest sings her drowsy tune ;
 The sharp-winged cuckoo floats across the crescent moon.

Among the blue-ranged heights
 Dark gleam the odorous pines ;
 Star-strown with holy lights
 Glimmer the myriad shrines ;
 At eve the seaward-creeping breeze
 Soft stirs the drowsy bells along the temple frieze.

Your snowy mountain draws
 To Heaven its tranquil lines ;
 Within, through sulphurous jaws,
 The molten torrent shines ;
 So calm, so bold your years shall flow,
 Pure as yon snows above, a fiery heart below.

From us you shall acquire
 Stern labour, sterner truth,
 The generous hopes that fire
 The spirit of our youth ;
 And that strong faith we reckon ours,
 Yet have not learned its strength, nor proved its dearest powers

And we from you will learn
 To gild our days with grace,
 Calm as the lamps that burn
 In some still holy place ;
 The lesson of delight to spell,
 To live content with little, to serve beauty well.

Your wisdom, sober, mild,
 Shall lend our knowledge wings ;
 The star, the flower, the child,
 The joy of homely things,
 The gracious gifts of hand and eye,
 And dear familiar peace, and sweetest courtesy.

Perchance, some war-vexed hour,
 Our thunder-throated ships
 Shall thrid the foam, and pour
 The death-sleet from their lips ;
 Together raise the battle-song,
 To bruise some impious head, to right some tyrannous wrong.

But best, if knit with love,
 As fairer days increase,
 We twain shall learn to prove
 The world-wide dream of peace ;
 And, smiling at our ancient fears,
 Float hand in faithful hand across the golden years.

NOVELS WITH A MORAL.

THE productions of an art are usually regarded by the great public rather as means to ends than as ends in themselves. Pictures, poems, plays, all as a general rule must have some further object besides the aesthetic pleasure they are designed to give. Occidental humanity, and more especially the English race, holds the idea that pleasure of itself is in a sense wicked. Consequently the beauty which pleases, unless it be wedded to some ethical or religious lesson, is often accounted worldly and vain. Oriental ideals are different; beauty itself is divine, and ethics can raise it no higher. From time to time we do hear the cry of art for art's sake, but the cry is for the most part dull and meaningless to our ears. Usually it serves to awaken the enthusiasm of those who are bored with moralising, or to arrest the attention of those who are seeking for a new pose. Here and there, irrespective of race or country, there exists the man who seeks the ideal of beauty, making no question of its use, preaching no sermon. To the Eastern mind, with its love of abstract speculation, this is usually patent; to the Western with its materialism and utilitarianism it seems cloudy, idle, unreal, and, not infrequently, wicked. Whether it is the wave of Puritanism which passed over Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that is responsible for this temperament, or whether the temperament is responsible for the Puritanism, it is impossible to decide; probably each accentuated the other.

The great misfortune of artistic production is that it is almost bound to be accommodated to the taste of some person or persons other than its producer. For the sake of a livelihood or, it may be, for the more subtle object of fame, artists are usually tempted to desert, consciously or unconsciously, ideals. Various attempts have at different times been made to obviate this evil. Literary academies, patrons, and cliques have striven to free genius,—or let us say talent, for genius can free itself—from the chains of public approbation. But it is easy to see that such remedies serve only to narrow the public to which the artist has to appeal. Sometimes the desire for liberty from the restraints of public approval has induced artists to combine into schools, and even to bind themselves by vows to certain ideals. Such devices have, however, never proved completely successful; they are bound to become irksome sooner or later, either because unfettered genius transcends such limits, or because the desire for fame or wealth induces the artist to meet the public taste half-way. Possibly in the future we may have a combination of idealistic publishers or picture-dealers, who will consent to force public taste upwards at the expense, for the moment, of their incomes. But even then, when the rival firms are bankrupt, it is probable that the combination will once more conform to verdicts of popular taste. The effect of this has been to make the works of the majority of artists of all kinds in varying degrees reflec-

tions of the age in which they live. He who seeks to please aims at what is likely to please; but he who would teach, couches his lessons in such forms as will best commend themselves: in different degrees the public tastes, characteristics, and ideals must be reflected in the result. Where, however, there is that vague something which we call genius, it often seeks neither to please nor to teach; then and then alone is the work really independent of its public. Something of an individual bent there always is, greater or less according to the power of the artist; but his very individuality, apart from any definite or indefinite attempt to win public applause, is naturally impregnated with the ideals and aspirations of his age and race. At all events much originality would seem to be rare in art, and, where it does apparently exist, is often found rather to have proceeded from than to have inspired some new movement.

All this is, of course, far more marked in the case of the fine than of the useful arts. And of the fine arts themselves it would seem to apply most particularly to the branch of literature which is called the novel. For if we go with Bacon and divide literature into the three branches of history, philosophy, and poetry, or, to make the root-idea of the classification clearer, into those forms which proceed more particularly from memory, reason, and imagination respectively, it is at once obvious that the third is the one from which the novel originally springs. That is to say, belonging, as it does, to the most aesthetic type of literature, and being perhaps the lightest and least permanent modification of that type, it lives greatly on mere momentary approbation, and consequently reflects most the ephemeral public tastes of its time. Each of these branches of

literature tends to invade the domains of the others; indeed the worth of this classification has been impugned on the score of the impossibility of any one type existing without some element of one or both of the others. The novel, by its descent from the epic or narrative poem, is closely connected with history, and early in its career imported into itself something of philosophy. It is this importation of philosophy which forms the novel with a moral. In this connection we might remark that it is, as a rule, neither the moral deduced from the incidents, nor the fact that the incidents actually occurred, which makes a novel a permanent classic. Evanescent as the novel by its own attributes necessarily is, yet the permanency it does sometimes attain is usually due more to those attributes than to the force of the imported historical or philosophical features.

To trace accurately and exhaustively the story as a literary form is almost impossible, and certainly unnecessary for our present purpose; but we may indicate generally a certain number of distinct lines of development. The stories of the East, dealing chiefly with supernatural marvels, are the first to be set aside in our present subject. The type existed in English literature and is to be found chiefly in the chap-books of the sixteenth century. But the moralising element never intruded to any great extent. Another of the great branches of fiction is the chivalric story in all its different homes and periods. As the stories of marvels were to the commons of the marketplace, so were the stories of chivalry to the lords of the castle. On the whole free from moralising, the fact that their main theme dealt with ideal virtues and characters caused them to inculcate certain lessons in the rude morality of the times. More

over in a later development of this type, the *ARCADIA* of Sir Philip Sidney, we find that among other additions and variations the author develops that sententiousness which definitely draws the moral of his incidents, and scatters his pages over with moral maxims and apophthegms. With the *CHANSONS DE GESTE*, with *THE ARABIAN NIGHTS*, with *Fryars Bacon*, *Bungay*, *Rush* and the rest of them, we have little to do; morals may be, but as a rule are not, drawn from them, and we must pass on to what more directly concerns our present subject.

From the twelfth century onward we find floating about Europe, chiefly among the humbler classes of society, a type of story essentially different from those referred to above, though sharing with the stories of the marvellous their Eastern origin. This was the short tale, realistic in its manner, often comic, and often didactic in its character. Such are the French *FAB-LIAUX*, the *GESTA ROMANORUM*, the *SEVEN WISE MEN OF EPHESUS*, and many others. Many of these reached England and were translated or copied by English writers, of whom the most notable is of course Chaucer. We are accustomed to regard it as essential that a novel should be in prose and not in verse, and we consequently do not as a rule regard *THE CANTERBURY TALES* as novels. Why this should be so is not entirely clear. In Chaucer's England the contrary, if anything, was the case, because prose was not deemed so suitable a vehicle for literature as verse. In proof of this the apologies which herald the only two of *THE CANTERBURY TALES* that are in prose may be quoted. When the Host stops Chaucer's "Rime of Sire Thopas" he says to him :

Sire, at o word, thou shalt no lenger rime.

Let se wher thou canst tellen aught in
geste,

Or tellen in prose somewhat at the leste,
In which ther be som mirthe or som
doctrine.

To which Chaucer replies :

I wol you tell a litel thing in prose,
That oughte liken you, as I suppose,
Or elles, certes, ye ben to dangerous.
It is a moral tale vertuous.

Here in a word, as Mr. Raleigh says in his *HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH NOVEL*, the Host positively invites Chaucer to produce the first English novel. Chaucer, however, produces not so much a novel as a didactic allegory. And again, when the Parson is called upon for his tale he says :

I cannot geste rom, ram, ruf, by my
letter,
And, God wote, rime hold I but litel
better.
And therefore, if you list, I wol not
glose,
I wol you tell a litel tale in prose.

And with this preface he proceeds to deliver a treatise on the Deadly Sins and their cure. From these indications, and from a general survey of the literature of the time, we gather that prose was not in general regarded as a vehicle for anything but a popular anecdote or a didactic disquisition, and that, though the didactic and comic tales of the Continent had penetrated to Europe, they were not to be rendered in prose.

In the fifteenth century, however, they began to be translated into English prose, which the work of *Mandeville* and of *Malory* and his contemporaries caused to be regarded as a sufficiently dignified medium for literature. Here, then, are the first novels with a moral in English. Those who are unwilling to seek the originals in the translations printed by *Wynkyn de Worde* may find some of the stories, with alterations and additions and with the moral more or less left to be inferred, in such varied

productions as Gower's *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*, Chaucer's *MAN OF LAWES TALE*, Shakespeare's *KING LEAR* and *MERCHANT OF VENICE*, Barham's *LEECH OF FOLKESTONE*, Longfellow's *KING ROBERT OF SICILY*, and *THE STAFF AND SCRIP* of Rossetti. And what is to be said of these stories? Great literary productions they certainly were not. An anecdote was told, often coarse, often dull, rarely neither; to this was commonly tacked a laboured moral, sometimes explaining the story as an allegory, sometimes merely drawing a lesson from the incidents related. The stories were not natives of English soil, and have not survived in the form of a novel. Nevertheless they deserve mention as showing that the idea of utilising fiction as a medium for a homily is as old as the eleventh century in Europe and survived up to the thirteenth and fourteenth in England. Then, as now, the story was welcomed by the saintly-minded for the sake of the moral, and the moral swallowed by the worldly for the sake of the story.

The first great original English novel was the *EUPHUES* of John Lyly. To call this strange work a novel with a moral would be incorrect. The reason why the reader finds it so hard to reconcile the *EUPHUES* with his idea of a novel, is that the story, such as it is, forms so slight and unimportant a part of the whole work. Ten lines would suffice to sketch all the important incidents of the book. The really noticeable features are three: the style, with its laboured and continued alliteration, antithesis, and allusion; the pseudo-scientific description of the characteristics and habits of the flora and fauna of Nature; and the continual moralising, with the occasional divergence into some such homily as "A cooling card for all fond lovers," or

"How the life of a young man should be led." Here we have several of the most notable characteristics of the court of Queen Elizabeth. Firstly, there is imitation of Italian imitations of a little known classical style of Rome or Greece or both combined, which was the new learning among people of fashion and quality; secondly, the floods of the apocryphal lore of the Bestiaries, which were as much an intellectual disease of that age as statistical calculations are of our own; and thirdly, and here especially the author's own personality comes out, the traces of deep thinking on the problems of life, which formed the great undercurrent of the sparkling tide of Elizabethan life and literature. Not yet, however, were the moral and the novel assimilated one to the other; hardly indeed had they any connection at all. The system of taking for hero a prig and making him enter into, and then moralise upon, the fashionable vices of the time is not likely to be entirely successful. To the profane reader the long-winded moralities are apt to be tiresome; to the pious the experiences which called them forth are apt to be shocking. Nevertheless Euphuism became the fashion; ladies of the Court talked and wrote in the style, and, we may hope, thought out the morals.

In a work published shortly after this famous novel a new type of story was introduced into England, this time from Spain. *THE UNFORTUNATE TRAVELLER, OR THE LIFE OF JACK WILTON*, was an English attempt at the picaresque romance, that is to say the realistic description of the knaveries and adventures of a cheery, witty, successful rascal. This type in its inception can only be said to have a bad moral, in that success and prosperity attend the rogue of a hero, but to it is partially at any rate due

the development of the realistic novel to which we shall shortly have to refer as the most important type of novel with a moral.

But before coming to the epoch of realism let us linger for a moment on one of the most unique figures in our whole literature. John Bunyan is the novelist of Puritan England. What he wrote was allegory ; his moral far outweighed his incident in importance, and he and his followers would have been the first to spurn the title of novelist for him. Nevertheless the fact remains. His imagination and his story-telling power would at any other time and in any other circumstances have produced a history of adventures, or his analytic observation a psychological romance. But had it not been for his religious predilections it is probable that he would never have followed so dignified a model of style, and possible that he would never have written at all. Artificial in a sense as was his style, didactic as was his purpose, he does not, like Lylly, weary even the irreligious. His work was not inartistic ; he does not conceal his moral in his story, nor do his teachings crowd out the incidents. The reader has the incidents presented to him and is left to form his own conclusions as to the exact lesson, though of course no great penetration is required to do so.

Morals played no very important part in the literature which accompanied the reaction against Puritanism ; and it is not, therefore, till we come to the more settled atmosphere of the eighteenth century that we need look for any moralising novels. Meanwhile a great change for literature had come about. There had grown up, perhaps for the first time in our country, a genuine reading public. No longer were the scholars, the ecclesiastics, or the courtiers the sole patrons of their several literary

favourites. Cliques had in a great measure yielded to a public which paid for what it read. More than ever, therefore, was literature, and especially the novel, likely to reflect the chief characteristics of the age.

If ever any man wrote simply to please his readers and to charm their money from them, that did Daniel Defoe. Developing the picaresque romance from the story of a knavish life to the story of a life, and appreciating the fact that the materialism of the age demanded at all events an appearance of truth, he passed on from his more or less fictitious biographies of real, to those of unreal people. And he was wise enough to see that Puritanism had left sufficient traces on the public he addressed for it to desire some moral teaching to be thrown in. Who does not remember poor Crusoe's debit and credit account of the evil and the good in his condition, and his final summing up in a receipt to his Creator for the balance of good ? How keenly this must have appealed to the utilitarian and crude moralists of his time ! Again, let anyone read the author's preface to *COLONEL JACK*, which in its main outlines follows more closely than any the lines of the picaresque romance.

The various turns of his fortune [he writes] in different scenes of life make a delightful field for the reader to wander in ; a garden where he may gather wholesome and medicinal fruits, none noxious or poisonous ; where he will see virtue, and the ways of wisdom, everywhere applauded, honoured, encouraged, and rewarded : vice and extravagance attended with sorrow, and every kind of infelicity : and at last, sin and shame going together, the offender meeting with reproach and contempt, and the crimes with detestation and punishment.

In the preface to *THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF DUNCAN CAMPBELL* we find the same strain.

Instead of making them (the Ladies and Gentlemen of Great Britain) a bill of fare, out of patchwork romances of polluting scandal, the good old gentleman who wrote the *Adventures of my Life* has made it his business to treat them with a great variety of entertaining passages, which always terminate in morals that tend to the edification of all readers, of whatever sex, age, or profession.

Thus did Defoe ensure the popularity of his work, by assuring the prudish that all his realistic descriptions of low life, so fascinating in themselves, were narrated unto edification.

The next great novelist to appear was almost a greater moralist than any of his predecessors, if we except Bunyan. Living in his coterie of sentimental ladies the little printer Richardson had once assisted three young women to write their love-letters. In this and in many other ways he had had unique opportunities of probing into the depths of the feminine heart and mind. When in his middle-age he was asked to "prepare a volume of familiar letters in a common style on such subjects as might be of use to those country readers who were unable to indite for themselves," his experiences and his view of life led him to suggest that he should also teach them how "to think and act in common cases." These objects he decided to forward by utilising a story of country life which suited his particular style and sentiments. Thus there grew under his hand "*PAMELA, OR VIRTUE REWARDED*, in a series of familiar letters from a beautiful young damsel to her parents: published in order to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the young of both sexes." Very different as was the success of this adventure from what he had anticipated, it nerved him to make his further famous efforts in a similar but bolder manner.

Thus in the eighteenth century was the moralising novel firmly established. In Defoe's case the moralising had been slightly forced, but cunningly interwoven with the story; in Richardson's the moral was uppermost in his mind. Nevertheless Richardson's art in unfolding the story, his minute dissection of the human heart, and above all his intimate knowledge of the feminine character, made the whole a work of art. Not all Fielding's clever parodying could obscure the greatness of a genius who incidentally happened to be a prig. It is not for the morals that we now read Defoe and Richardson; debit and credit morality is fortunately now going out of date. Still, as a reflection of the moral standard of the age even the moralising is interesting, and it cannot be denied that these authors genuinely attempted to make the moral an integral portion of their general plan instead of a mere accretion on the story, or a series of sermons sufficient to swamp even the most stirring of incidents.

The school contemporary with Richardson was ushered in by Fielding's *JOSEPH ANDREWS*. In this book, which he designed for a parody of *PAMELA*, the author soon strayed from his original track and struck out a path for himself. Both Fielding and Smollett wrote chiefly stories allied to the picaresque romance as developed by Defoe. A certain strain of sententiousness there sometimes was in their works, but it was of anything rather than of a propagandist or highly moral nature. The method of Fielding, in whose stories this is more common, was to let his various characters express their various views on the incidents in which he places them; these views are by no means necessarily those of the author himself, who devotes a page or even a chapter here and there to discussing

in the first person the views, actions, and characters of his *dramatis personæ*. This was a great advance on the epistolary method of Richardson. There the author himself, teeming with moral lessons, never had the chance of giving them to the world in the first person ; the lessons had to be crammed into the mouths and actions of the comparatively few characters ; and the result was that the characters were usually either of the most irritating virtue or of the blackest vice, the former only liable to misfortune, the latter to conversion. The saving grace of humour was not granted to Richardson. He put the sentiments of a prudish old ladies' man into the mouths of all his virtuous characters, and painted in lurid colours the fashionable vices he had but little opportunity of observing. The moral is too obvious, the characters too arbitrarily drawn for any but the rudest intellects.

The eighteenth century in England was a period of which Dr. Johnson expresses the cardinal theory when he says "we are affected only as we believe." Whatever may have been true of the Englishman of that century, this is certainly not, as Dr. Johnson thought it was, true of human nature in general. We are not only affected as we believe, but also as we imagine. Moreover we are undoubtedly affected and influenced by our emotions, which have very little to do with reasoned belief. Nevertheless this theory seems to a great extent true of that particular age ; to it must be ascribed that realism in literature of which we have spoken, to it also that which we have called the debit and credit school of morality. The story had to seem reasonably true before it could interest ; the morality had more or less to be proved by results before it could be accepted. Another characteristic

of the age, produced by the rapid movements of states and peoples in the direction of democracy, was the prevalence of theorists and propagandists. Accordingly theories and propaganda found their way, though fortunately not universally, into many of the novels of the time. Mrs. Behn's *OONOOKO*, Shebbeare's *LYDIA*, and many others represent in the most unnatural manner the theory of the natural man. To go into this here would be out of place ; let it suffice to say that in the return to a state of Nature was to be sought the panacea for human afflictions, and the novelists took a savage and burdened him with every virtue to prove their theory. The pursuit of the panacea is also to be noted in that remarkable work, which has been called rather a study in imaginative ethics than a novel, *RASSELAS PRINCE OF ABYSSINIA*. The prince, with every concomitant of happiness about him, is not happy ; he therefore goes abroad to seek happiness in the world. A pastoral life, solitude, marriage, pleasure, all are discussed and thrown aside. The best that can be said even for virtue is that all that it can afford is quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state ; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience, but we must remember that patience must suppose pain. Pessimistic as all this is, still it marks a steadier outlook, and is more real than the exaltation of a state of savagery. The lesser physician will often have suggested a cure long before the greater has satisfied himself as to the complaint. Johnson wrote a work which is either one of the greatest novels the world has seen, or one of the worst. In most things that belong more particularly to a novel it is bad, but it is so great a masterpiece of nondescript literature that the novel would claim it with pride as a member of its own class.

The school that has been styled the Tea-Table Novelists, comprising among others Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, and Mrs. Gaskell, has unobtrusively preached its gentle and respectable morality without destroying its artistic excellence. The virtuous are rewarded, the wicked are punished in the good old style, but the characters are less stereotyped, the situations more human than most of those delineated by Richardson. Fortunately, or unfortunately, our ideals of domestic virtues have changed since the days of Miss Austen, so that her moralities are now but a historic relic. Still the fact that the reader is more or less unconscious of the sermon, and is really interested in the psychology and incidents of the works, no doubt commends the ideals these gentlewomen were preaching more to us than many a lesson more modern and less artistically interwoven with the story.

The inevitable reaction against the realism and materialism of the eighteenth century came in the Romantic Revival. Whether we consider it in the supernatural romances of Clara Reeve, of Mrs. Radcliffe, and of Horace Walpole, in the historical romances of Scott, or in the psychological romances of the Brontës, we come to the same conclusion, that romance has had in literature but little connection with didactic tendencies. We meet with no more important novels with a moral until we come to the middle of the nineteenth century.

It is impossible here to do anything like justice to the magnificent outburst of fiction which signalises the middle of the last century. It was a return to realism, but to a far truer realism than had been known before. It was appreciated that a minute observation of life and char-

acter was absolutely essential to true realism. It was not enough to delude like Defoe, to know thoroughly a portion of human nature like Richardson. Appearance, name, circumstances, superficial characteristics, inward springs of action, all must be studied and reproduced to attain a true picture of life. No one has the right to preach from an isolated fragment of life. As Matthew Arnold said of Sophocles, so might we say of the great novelists, that they "saw life steadily and saw it whole." The old evil of generalising from one or two particular instances has in the fiction of our own day revived; but it was wonderfully absent from the work of the great artists of the time of Thackeray. Let us content ourselves with the consideration of the methods of the three greatest, of Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot. As a moralist Dickens was far beneath the other two. The lessons he had to teach, the abuses he strove to remove, were concrete and narrow. Whether it was the evils of the Debtors' Prison or the absurdities of Departmental Red Tape that he wished to show, whether the cruelty of a Quilp, or the knavery of a Uriah Heep, it was always a single circumscribed object of attack. The reason why Dickens was greater than the didactic novelists of the eighteenth century is because his pictures of life were truer, his grasp of the variety of human character stronger. As a moralist his chief point of inferiority is due to that very art of caricature which establishes him as a humorist. Caricature involves the exaggeration of peculiarities, and, however valuable this may be for provoking laughter, it is apt to be a fatal bar to propounding ethics. When Dickens was teaching a lesson, he was apt to exaggerate in each of his characters the

peculiarity necessary to their place in his scheme. Squeers and Quilp are just a little too ogreish, as Esther Summerson and Florence Dombey are too gentle and sweet. It is not by much that he fails in this respect, and when he is not moralising he often does not fail at all. But this is the reason why in his works, as in those of many another great novelist, the minor characters are better drawn than the heroes and heroines. In the less important folk the author can let his fancy play aided by his observation of human nature, the chief actors must have the peculiarity which marks their place in the chief incidents accentuated, and it is often over-accentuated. Dickens's method was to inculcate lessons of conduct or to urge the removal of abuses by arousing the sympathies and antipathies, not often by appealing directly to the reason. How pitiable or loveable is this, how abominable or hateful is that, is the train of thought he wished to induce. At times he succeeded, but his greatness lies outside the sphere of novels with a moral and must be left to other criticisms.

The method of Thackeray is entirely different. He seems to take his reader with him to an eminence, whence he points out the figures moving in the world below. "Look," he seems to say, "at these poor creatures toiling and suffering, resting and rejoicing; note their characters; let us watch them and moralise a little." We are hardly conscious of any definite lesson; here is vice, there is virtue. Vice is not always punished, nor, at all events superficially, does it seem unattractive; virtue is often insipid, rarely heroic. The very good people are often bores, the very bad often amusing. This is the world; make what you can of it. The author is willing to give you his opinions on

a point here and there, and does so in a human, kindly way. One thing alone can make him really angry, and that is a snob. But even a snob may make himself useful, and his snobbishness may be funny. All this may seem very slipshod to the upright, almost wicked to the saintly. But Thackeray and the mass of us are not upright saints; we can accept the facts of human nature, even if they are not strictly moral according to the received code. Thackeray's moral is perhaps not the loftiest, but it cannot lead far astray, for it is based upon truth. Human nature may be full of foibles, faults, and vanities, but it is human nature for all that, and we know it and love it. Make the best of it, there it is. To point a moral from a story of human incident and character, it is necessary that the delineation of character and incident should be true to nature, otherwise the lesson neither appeals to reason, nor to emotions, and consequently fails. This is above all what Thackeray appreciated. Whatever differences in method and style Thackeray and Dickens may present they have one feature in common; they teach or try to teach their lessons by a direct appeal to the emotions.

George Eliot, and after her Mr. Meredith while seeking the same truth which had been the first principle of their two predecessors, taught mainly by an appeal to the reason. The theory of George Eliot is that character is not to be regarded as simple and constant, but as complex and varying. The result is that throughout life occasions arise for decision between the promptings of the one or of the other side of the character. From the consequences of such isolated decisions arise the successes and failures of life. No one can deny that sympathy with all

the details of the life she knew was an attribute of George Eliot, but emotions, she seems to say, are not to run riot and draw morals without the assistance of reason. Mr. Meredith, with a somewhat similar method, teaches differently ; sentimentalism he thinks a fault alike in letters and in life ; it is closely allied to the animal side of human nature and is the cause of many of our social evils. This is a different lesson, but it is taught with the same reasoned sympathy as is claimed by George Eliot. His characters are less varying because they have often to exhibit a particular quality or group of qualities in the scheme of the work ; but this does not go so far as to border on caricature, for the true study of humanity has developed beyond that point. It is hard to say whether we are to regard Mr. Meredith's work as an end or as a beginning. In truth to natural characters, in the absence of sententiousness, in the artistic combinations of novel and moral he may be regarded as the consummation of a school. In the kind of morals he points, and in the way in which he indicates a problem of society rather than suggests a rule, he is the pioneer of many who have never gone so far as he goes.

One of the most marked characteristics of our age is a certain scepticism,—or let us translate and say, a spirit of enquiry. We cannot or will not accept a dogma unless we have no alternative. Rules of conduct and of society which have been accepted throughout the history of civilisation to-day require defence. Consequently the novelist, as also the playwright, has developed a new method. An institution or a custom is taken, marriage more often than any, and a story is told in which its defects are made apparent. The problem as to whether it is to be

upheld or not is left unsolved, when both sides have vigorously sustained their arguments. Conversation and contrast are required to attract the public ; the rival arguments are therefore exhibited in brilliant (or what is designed to be brilliant) repartee, and the most painful features of realism are often set off in sharp relief from scenes of the most artificial or Arcadian innocence. The fierce punishment the world metes out to the fallen woman is inflicted amid rural peace and simplicity ; a pair of comic, and impossible, children give the title and a back-ground to a work which deals with the most sordid and miserable problems of fashionable morality. Ill-executed as it so often is, this method can often prejudice, sometimes disgust ; yet in its successful expositions it is capable of much. If you would arouse the emotions and appeal at the same time to the reason, it is in the crude contrasts of life that your point can be best made. People are to be amused, but they are also to be taught ; nor are lessons which we can apply to our friends unpleasant for us to study. The life exhibited must be true, the problems vital to please the modern mind ; and our hurried and jaded minds must above all things have what pleases them. Thus again we find the tendencies of the age reflected in its literature. No subject is too lofty or too debased for full treatment, no views too bold or too unconventional for exposition. The breaking up of the old order without the superimposition of the new is freely accepted ; the faultiness of a system is often exhibited, while the obvious logical result of its abandonment is shirked. The unusual and bizarre attract ; the obvious and commonplace repel. The prevailing weakness is a certain looseness no less of morals than of logic and style. A smart saying often pleases more than

a heroic or beautiful action, a sharp contrast than a gradual climax. Here are the tendencies of a certain section of the English people, and that section comprises most of the regular novel-readers. Something of good there is in all this. It is right to be able to tolerate a genuine realism ; it is good to think at all on what have become the problems of life. The man who can take the rules his ancestors made for his conduct and neither question nor break them, may or may not be virtuous, but he almost certainly is a fool. The man who starts for himself and asks how far reason can take him, and where human nature runs foul of it, and who, after struggling for the key to the problems and the road to the good and the right, very likely fails to find either, is very rarely a fool and very rarely vicious.

And when all is said and the systems and morals surveyed, does the novel really teach lessons of ethics or advance propaganda? Has it really served to remove abuses, to elucidate problems, and to ventilate wrongs? Who can say? Something is done by making a thing a feature of general conversation, and that a successful novel can do. Something too is done by discovering any loophole at all in our busy lives for ethical or abstract

problems. But whether those who read the novel most assiduously are those who will learn and think, whether the lesson we may perhaps glean is not invariably applied away from ourselves, whether the moral merely serves as in the old cases to excuse the lightness, and other and more doubtful fascinations, of the story, are questions which cannot but occur. And one other point arises. Even if the novel has assisted in the didactic field, have the morals been advantageous to the literary form of the novel? So much has the novel been imbued with this didactic quality that it is hard to see what history it could otherwise have had. Nevertheless there could have, and indeed there has been a class of novels at most times more or less flourishing which is neither excused nor popularised by a moral, and in it are to be found some of the greatest. The truth is that it is not the presence or absence of a moral, be it good or bad, which affects, more than any other incident, the excellence of the story ; that depends on other things. A novel may be a classic despite its moral, or it may die with ever so lofty a lesson stillborn.

B. N. LANGDON-DAVIES.

SLAVES OF THE OAR.

WHENEVER the subject of rowing is mentioned there comes up before us at once a picture of an unhappy man who, by reason of his weight, was put into the middle of the boat and when there was subjected to a series of insults from a fierce person riding along the bank on a horse or a bicycle. We (for we were that man) can still hear the hoarse voice shrieking denunciations of Five, and commanding him to "get his hands away," "not to bucket," "to come up evenly on that slide," "to keep his eyes in the boat," with a thousand other pieces of peremptory advice, all to be followed instantly on pain of every most fearful anathema that mind of coach could conceive. We may be wrong, but it seemed to us that the rowing-coach becomes more objurgatory in proportion as his men become more experienced in the art of rowing. Certainly when we first took our seat in a "tub-pair," displaying, like Dionysus in Charon's ferry-boat, a lamentable ignorance as to whether it was proper to sit "at the oar or upon it," we were treated with great and patient kindness, and were much flattered at the end of our instruction on being told that we had a "keen blade,"—though we had no sort of idea what was meant thereby, and indeed are in some doubt even now. But as we gradually learned that the style of the traditional waterman is a thing to be avoided, the coach seemed to think us ripe for more energetic counsel and began to let his caustic tongue play on us like a lambent flame; and a great relief it must have been to him after so many weeks of self-repression.

To be strictly honest we must admit that Four, Three, and Bow also came in for a good deal of abuse, and that Five was not quite alone in his misery; and doubtless we all deserved it, every word. Nevertheless it rankled at the time, and it seemed to us unreasonable that when we rowed with energy and displayed enthusiasm we were accused of *bucketing*, and when, in our eagerness to amend this fault, we relaxed our efforts a little we were promptly told that we were *sugaring* or *slumming*. Often in the evening we conferred with Four, Three, and Bow on the situation, and spoke with seriousness and freedom. Three was usually the most emphatic, and he would stand on the hearthrug with his back to the fire polishing his pipe on the palm of his hand while he discoursed. "I'm beastly sore," he would say to sympathetic ears. "I tell you what it is, this rowing's mere slavery, and you don't even get any thanks for it; the harder you work, the more you get cursed. I believe it's like fishing; you're born so,—or else you've been at Eton," he added on one occasion in confused indignation. "Why on earth," he went on, "I gave up football for it I can't imagine. I would have been in the team by now." Modesty, let us add, was not so apparent in Three's conversation as was his Scottish origin. Thereupon it appeared that all four of us would have achieved laurels at any other branch of athletics. Five, we remember, expressed his humble opinion that a very efficient forward had been lost to the world of Rugby football when he dedicated himself

to the oar. But we arrived at no definite conclusion, for at this point Bow hinted that Five was mistaken and that the utmost he could have hoped for might have been a "blue" for chess,—provided, of course, that he had known how to play the game. The talk now developed a personal note, and the subject of rowing was dropped.

Many a time did we declaim after this sort, but still we turned up at the boat-house dutifully every day and earned our meed of cursing with the sweat of our bodies. Once even, when Stroke was down with influenza, and the crew was allowed to take a day or two off, it was Three who proposed going out in a four-oar, taking the coach in the stern, and it was Five, Four, and Bow who supported him. That the said four-oar was upset within a few yards of the landing-stage and that the coach, who was unchanged, ruined a most gorgeous waistcoat thereby, detracts nothing from the merit of our intentions. These things will happen, and a coach ought to know better than to go out on the treacherous Cam without changing his raiment. Hereby we solemnly declare that the responsibility for the accident does not rest with Five, and if this should meet the eye of the gentleman who was seated in the stern when it occurred we would beg him to take a note of it.

We never became a good oar; that is to say we were never more than a stop-gap or an experiment on a sliding seat, and we did not attain to the dignity of a share in the May races. On these great occasions it was our duty to stand and shout; at least that is how we interpreted it, for there was, we believe, an idea that he who rowed not should run while he shouted. We objected to running, for we considered that it

could not justly be counted as part of the oarsman's functions. But there came a time when we were made to submit to the indignity, and that was when we went into training for the Lent races and were obliged to run several minutes before breakfast. Nor was this the worst of it. If the coach happened to be in a merry mood he would sometimes allow us to get out of the boat at that good hostelry, the Pike and Eel, after we had rowed a course and were weary. But we were never quite sure that it was a kindness, for we had to run home, and the distance to the boat-house is a very good mile,—after a course it seems two. One day we stooped to duplicity in company with Four, and stopped running as soon as our tyrant (who was on a bicycle) was out of sight. Now there is a church-yard through which one must pass on the homeward way, and it is separated from an adjoining meadow by a low wall. As we pursued our leisurely path across this abode of peace we were suddenly horrified to find the face of our coach surveying our progress from the other side of the wall without approval. He upbraided us sternly, and, though we admitted our guilt, we pointed out to him that our duplicity was as nothing to that of a man who got off his bicycle and hid behind a wall for purposes of reconnoitring. Nevertheless he made us run again.

Looking back on the past we cannot imagine how we ever permitted ourselves to go into training. We tremble when we think of the quantity of food we consumed, and we marvel at having been able to digest it without the aid of tobacco. That we never rebelled must have been due to the strength of public opinion, the power of which is almost as great in a college as in a school. Indeed we can only remember one man who,

having committed himself to the oar, was strong enough to break his chain when it came to the question of training. He explained that he was a temperate man on the whole, but that his only object in eating was that he might subsequently smoke. If he went into training then, he would be obliged to eat five times as much as at ordinary times and that would necessitate his being intemperate in the matter of tobacco, for he would require to smoke ten times as much as usual. It was pointed out to him that he would not be allowed to smoke at all, whereupon he said that, in that case, he would assuredly die. So he was allowed to depart in peace, and he became a volunteer and a mighty marksman, and won cups and medals, which shows, among other things, that it is easier to serve one's country than one's college.

It was a great relief when the races were over, and we were free to eat the bread of idleness, and to dismiss the memories of training and its rigours in great clouds of fragrant smoke. We are not now sure whether the consciousness that we had been bumped as much as any boat on the river did not in a way add to our feeling of pride, though at the time we professed great indignation. The golden mean is not always satisfactory, and if one cannot make bumps it is at least something to be able to say that one "went down every night." The boat that merely keeps its place excites no interest. Moreover (we say it with shame) it saves much labour to be bumped early in the proceedings, though we have known it to cause additional trouble. On the last night, for instance, we were bumped as early as is considered decent, so early in fact that the coxswain refused to believe it, and consequently did not hold up his hand in the orthodox manner as a signal

for the other boat to stop rowing. The result was that it did not stop, and rowed into and over us; we saved ourselves by swimming, but by a righteous judgment the coxswain was tied up in the rudder-lines and was nearly drowned. It did not make him penitent, though, for when his error was brought home to him afterwards, he said that if the crew had only rowed decently there would have been no occasion for him to hold up his hand, but, as it was, so incompetent a set of men deserved their ducking.

In these days our normal feeling is one of calm acquiescence in the fact that we row no longer, and something like pity for those misguided ones who have taken our place; and yet there come times when we ask ourselves whether we would not give up all the placid delights of Sandow his exerciser for those glorious but interminable minutes when our heart failed within us, our lungs ceased to perform their office, our ears were filled with the innumerable laughter of ocean, and our eyes saw nothing but Six's straining back. The feelings of the man rowing in a race have been excellently expressed by Mr. R. C. Lehmann in these lines :

What thoughts went flying through
your mind, how fared it, Five, with
you?
But Five made answer solemnly: "I
heard them fire a gun,
No other mortal thing I knew until
the race was done."

It is almost impossible for those who have never rowed to understand what it really means, for the knowledge of it is hardly to be acquired at second-hand, and if it were, there is hardly any literature of the pastime, descriptive literature that is to say, for there are plenty of books

of instruction and statistics. It seems to have been left principally to the Lady-Novelist to set forth the aesthetic side of rowing, and as her idea of an oarsman appears to be based on the size of his forearm, and as her notions of training include a ten o'clock breakfast and a meerschaum pipe, she is hardly a safe guide. There is what purports to be a quotation which we were brought up to believe implicitly, "They all rowed a fast stroke but six rowed faster than anybody ;" but it may be apocryphal, for we understood that it was not meant to be satirical, in which case we could have accepted it as fair comment ; we have seen such things but we have not known them to receive praise except from the Lady-Novelist. No doubt the popular conception that rowing is closely allied to, if not the same thing as, "being on the water in a boat" is partly due to her. Yet they are distinct arts,—we admit the other to be an art, though it is hardly any better understood—and should not be confused. Of course rowing takes place on the water, but we doubt whether a "light ship" or even a "clinker" can be called a boat except by courtesy. A boat is a large round thing capable of carrying six grown persons, twelve children, four hampers, and an oil-stove, besides the waterman who propels it. That is its capability ; but we think, for purposes of being on the water, that these are really rather too many, and for comfort we should suggest that it would about hold two men when a reasonable number of cushions is taken into consideration. But we wander somewhat from the point. To these eighteen people being in this round thing on the water is a form of aquatic carriage-exercise with a banquet to follow, and from it they can gather nothing as to the sister art. If, however, they were taken and put into two eights, if the waterman was instructed to coach them from the bank with some liberty in respect of language, and if they were made to row (not paddle) a course of a mile and a quarter, they would understand more about it. The idea suggests a nice mathematical problem for the consideration of the ingenious. If six grown persons and twelve children take two hours to cover a distance of a mile and a quarter propelled by a waterman in a round pleasure-boat, how long will the same persons take to cover the same distance in two eights when the waterman is taken away from them ? We believe there is no answer. Perhaps, though, it would be well not to make the experiment for who can foresee the consequences ? The progress of the eights might recall the horrors recorded by Mr. Kipling's galley-slave :

Our women and our children toiled
beside us in the dark—
They died, we filed their fetters, and
we heaved them to the shark—
We heaved them to the fishes, but so
fast the galley sped,
We had only time to envy, for we
could not mourn our dead.

The Lady-Novelist is, as we have said, much to blame for all this popular ignorance, but she is not alone. With her we must impeach that interesting person, the Ancient Mariner, who discourses of the stern art over his wine. Listening to him, one who knows nothing about it would almost be forced to the conclusion that rowing is composed three parts of blasphemy and one part of carousal, and that the tow-path is nothing more or less than a school of abuse. For truly the Ancient Mariner doth marvellously

relate concerning the sayings of the wild-eyed coach, him of the motto, *Flectere si nequeo superos Acheronta movebo*; and after the ladies are gone he will mouth you some dozen of his rounder oaths with exceeding relish of reminiscence. Furthermore he will carry his audience to the night after the races when he and his crew "drank out the stars and in the sun," and finally, each supporting each with mutual arm, wandered round the college court singing, untunefully perhaps but with right heartiness, the best of all boating-songs, that of Eton. Here is the manner of the singing most admirably set forth by a great writer, who indeed was describing another scene but has anticipated this.

Now we sang this song very well the first time . . . and we sang it again the second time, not so but what you might praise it (if you had been with us all the evening) . . . But when that song was in its third singing, I defy any man (however sober) to have made out one verse from the other, or even the burden from the verses, inasmuch as every man present . . . sang as became convenient to [him], in utterance both of words and tune.

Also he will relate with all fidelity of circumstance how after the singing the coxswain rebelled against the mild persuasion of the rest and announced that he proposed to spend the night in meditation under the stars, or what was left of them, right in the middle of the grass-plot sacred by law and custom to Dons and other kinds of "holy vegetable," and how for a while the others tearfully considered the situation and then, determined to save their beloved coxswain at any cost, with resolute concerted action took him and put him to bed; and how this occurred thirteen times, and at the last the coxswain, being more drunken and

therefore more determined, arose from his couch the thirteenth time and repaired again to the grassplot where in the grey dawn he was discovered by a porter.

Thus speaks the Ancient Mariner to the horror of the people, and it is not unlikely that he speaks the truth, as indeed our own small experience can testify; but these things are not rowing. You shall hear as many strange oaths when the University Fifteen falls to it with the men of Cardiff as ever were uttered on the tow-path, and more notable, for the keen discontent of football is expressed in many languages; there are the various inflections of howl born in hardy Scotland, wild Wales, and infuriated Ireland, and under all there is the deep strong bass of the Englishman who will never be a slave, and who requires the other nationalities to "get off my head, damn you, sir!" For good sound swearing we would sooner go to the scene of Rugby football than to any other place; though, from what we have heard or read (we forget which), America should be able to match it with its own variety of the game, in which the teams may choose their own weapons, and lest any should escape, policemen come on after the match armed with spiked clubs to finish off those that remain. It must be an expensive pastime, but productive of magnificent swearing; if indeed it be really so, for we confess our authority is but slight.

Also the bump-supper cannot by any means claim a monopoly of hilarity and strange doings. There are old school dinners (oh the Scotch schools!), football dinners, and private and public rejoicings in comparison with which the bump-supper would seem but a decorous breakfast-party or a game of silent whist. It was not a bump-supper which made two

amiable scholars so enthusiastic that they were fain to climb over a much bespiked ten foot wall, in order that they might tear down a wooden fence belonging to the town and bring it back over the wall as their contribution to the bonfire. Nor was it rowing which inspired the subsequent explanation to the incensed authorities that they did it in "a fit of abstraction."

And yet we have hinted that there is a measure of truth in the stories of the Ancient Mariner. As that other Ancient observes, "there is truth in the cups," and it is possibly due to the fact that people are more interested in these wild tales than in rowing itself, that the talker confines himself to them and so gives the impression that they are rowing, or at least the most important part of it. And what after all are these stories but traditions handed on from one generation of oarsmen to another, a sort of confession of faith in the oar? That they had an origin there can be little doubt, just as there is little doubt that the Homeric songs and the Shakespearean plays had an origin. But we need not therefore conclude that they originated with the Ancient Mariner, any more than we need take it for proved that Homer originated with Wolf or Shakespeare with Mrs. Gallup. For the rest the stories are good stories, and ancient stories, and certain of raising the ready laugh. Take, for instance, that of the coach who laboured along after his crew on foot for half a mile emitting as he ran a curious stream of oaths; finally he bade them easy, surveyed them despondently for some time, and ejaculated piteously, "It's too awful, I can't swear." The Ancient Mariner always tells this tale mentioning the name of the college and the coach. We ourselves have heard it of the

colleges of Exeter, Brazenose, and Wadham in Oxford, and of Pembroke, Caius, and Jesus in Cambridge; and we confess with shame that we have in our turn told it of another college that shall be nameless. Then there is the companion story, generally told at the same time, of the coach who spoke to his crew with a terrible calm: "You're all rowing badly except Six," whereat, we suppose, Six experienced some small feeling of triumph and showed it, for the coach continued incisively, "and he's rowing damned badly." There seems to be a certain fascination about bad language in the abstract, and there is nothing that our antique friend enjoys more than telling a story in which the point turns on an oath or oaths. We do not understand why it should be so, but it is also the case that one is always amused by such a story.

We have said that these incidents of the towing-path are matters of tradition, and that they did not originate with the Ancient Mariner, but it does not follow that they do not repeat themselves and happen over again with succeeding generations. Indeed, we could give instances in which they have happened, if not to ourselves, at least to our friends. We were actually in the boat on one occasion when the coxswain perceived that we were running straight into some piles, and in his agitation forgot the proper words of command and exhorted the astonished crew to "Woa!" Of course this produced no effect, and had it not been for the interposition of the coach, who remembered the words for him, the boat would have been crumpled up and the crew with it. We know that this was not the first occasion on which a coxswain has cried "Woa!" for we have heard the Ancient Mariner tell the story more than once, and have

admired the way in which he added to it the observations of the crew and the coach, which we ourselves should blush to record. This seems to be a good opportunity for us to make a statement in this connection, which we hope will counteract the influence of the Ancient Mariner's unwise anecdotes, by which, unintentionally no doubt, he deludes the public. We give our solemn assurance that it is not in the least necessary to learn to swear before you learn to row. We knew several,—no perhaps not several, but we certainly knew one or two oarsmen who did not swear at all. Further we would be disposed to wager a small sum that, with the exception of cricket, any other of the noble sports will call forth as much bad language as rowing and most of them more. We have no acquaintance with golf, otherwise we would instance it boldly, for we hear awful things of it from sources in which we have confidence.

It has just occurred to us that the term *Ancient Mariner* is as liable to misunderstanding as are his stories. He is not necessarily a bishop or a judge, and reverend in years and station; he may be quite young and insignificant, for he is only a person who has left the university, and whose rowing-days are over for that or other reasons. The younger he is the more misleading are his words. When a bishop narrates he can always begin with "In my day," or "When I was up," and that at once gives the impression that those bold bad times are no more. But with the younger sort the present is written on his face and the audience concludes that the bold bad times are in their heyday and that oars, boats, the towing-path, and Blues are things to be mentioned under the breath, so encompassed are they with profane swearing and deep drinking. Let everybody, then, re-

member that the Ancient Mariner is not speaking of rowing at all when he tells his stories, but of other matters which may or may not have something to do with it.

For conversation which really does deal with it one must go, not to the Ancient Mariner, but to the Able-bodied Seaman himself. You shall find him, half a dozen or more of him, sitting on the softest cushions he can obtain and talking profoundly of matters connected with the oar on almost any evening during term-time. He may, it is true, touch lightly on some new expression of abuse that has fallen from the coach's lips during the afternoon, but in the main he will be deeply serious and in earnest as he discusses his own boat and others. Talking of subjects which interest one especially has been stigmatised and is discouraged by the enlightened as *shop*. The higher spirits at a university are always opposed to shop in theory, that is to say to other people's shop. We shall never forget a little breakfast-party given by one of our friends at which he amazed us by a remarkable display of conversational athletics, and seemed to us to be talking for the pleasure of hearing his own voice. No subject came amiss to him; he held forth in the most shameless way and imparted a vast deal of unnecessary information, until the two other guests grew weary and departed. When they were gone we asked him what he did it for, and he told us that the two gentlemen, strangers to each other, were both extremely fond of golf, and that he was afraid they would find it out unless he kept the talk going. For our own part we think a man is more likely to be interesting on a subject in which he is himself interested, and therefore we have no constitutional objection to shop, which is perhaps as well for we used to talk an amazing

amount of it ourselves. Shop is always somewhat difficult to understand, unless one is conversant with the technical terms. What for instance would the names *whiff* or *funny* convey to the uninitiated? Even less we should think than *niblick* or *stimey*, which to us personally convey nothing. We will therefore expound. A whiff is the least safe sort of single-sculling-boat which the public can commonly obtain for its diversion, and it is morally certain that the inexperienced oar will upset himself in it. A funny is less safe still, and the public would scoff at the idea of going out in it at all, and most rightly. It is said that a penny balanced on the end of one outrigger will upset it, but we have not tried with a penny though we have upset it in other ways.

These terms will occur frequently in the conversation of the Able-bodied Seaman. He has always seen a freshman swimming or wading to the shore, for it is calculated that at least one freshman upsets his whiff on the lower river every day during full term. If it takes place in Barnwell Pool so much the merrier for the spectators, as all who know that fine expanse of what ought to be water will agree. These matters are by the way, and the Able-bodied Seaman does not really begin to talk till he gets to the Eights. Then you shall hear many strange expressions. This crew has no beginning; that crew does not keep it long, the other crew rolls all over the river; so-and-so gets his hands away but does not mark the finish; so-and-so holds it out but is slow with his hands; in their course to-day Emmanuel were a bit ragged round Grassy; Magdalene were all to pieces at the Willows; First were well together up the Long Reach.

Occasionally you shall hear speculations as to when Third are going to get out, and whether Downing will be able to put on, but these last are purely local hilarity. Then of course there is always the discussion of the unhappy individual who got in the way of the University Eight sculling himself in a tub. He will, you will be told, only be fined one guinea, because, fortunately for him, the boat did not have to stop. Had that happened he would have had to present the University Boat Club with a donation of five guineas without receiving either honour or gratitude. It is the worst offence of all to cause the University boat to pause in its career.

But we cannot pursue our meditations any further. It would take a volume to record the shop talked by the Able-bodied Seaman in an evening, and two more volumes to explain it. We will leave it therefore, lest worse should befall. As to rowing itself, we do not think we have succeeded in giving any information of value, though, when we were criticising the *Lady Novelist* and the *Ancient Mariner*, we certainly intended to do so. We find, however, like most critics, that the thing is not to be done,—we will be honest enough to add, at any rate by us. If any one is curious about the art we must repeat our former contention that knowledge of it is not to be acquired at second-hand, and advise him to try it in his own proper person. Perhaps then he will find out wherein consists that nameless fascination of the oar, which our poor pen cannot attempt to describe or explain, but which exists and must ever exist for all who have known what it is to swing, eight men together, out against the wind.

NUMBER FIVE.

KING DROUGHT.

My road is fenced with the bleached white bones,
 And strewn with the blind white sand,
 Beside me a suffering dumb world moans
 On the breast of a lonely land.

On the rim of the world the lightnings play,
 The heat-waves quiver and dance,
 And the breath of the wind is a sword to slay,
 And the sunbeams each a lance.

I have withered the grass where my hot hoofs tread
 I have whitened the sapless trees,
 I have driven the faint-heart rains ahead,
 To hide in their soft green seas :

I have bound the plains with an iron band,
 I have stricken the slow streams dumb.
 To the charge of my vanguards who shall stand ?
 Who stay when my cohorts come ?

The dust-storms follow and wrap me round,
 The hot winds ride as a guard ;
 Before me the fret of the swamps is bound,
 And the way of the wild-fowl barred.

I drop the whips on the loose-flanked steers,
 I burn their necks with the bow ;
 And the greenhide rips and the iron sears
 Where the staggering lean beasts go.

I lure the swagman out of the road
 To the gleam of a phantom lake ;
 I have laid him down, I have taken his load,
 And he sleeps till the dead men wake.

My hurrying hoofs in the night go by,
 And the great flocks bleat their fear,
 And follow the curve of the creeks burnt dry,
 And the plains scorched brown and sere.

The worn men start from their sleepless rest
 With faces haggard and drawn ;
 They cursed the red sun into the west,
 And they curse him out of the dawn.

They have carried my outposts out and out,
 But—blade of my sword for a sign !—
 I am the Master, the dread King Drought,
 And the great West Land is mine !

WILL H. OGILVIE.

THE CHINAMEN.

WHEN Henry Theobald, thrice mayor of Wexhampton, founded his almshouse in that town, it pleased him to confer a benefit on certain others beside the decayed burgesses for whom the hospital was primarily intended. Besides the chief magistracy, he had held the posts of churchwarden to St. Mary's and treasurer to the trustees of the Ilkwell Grammar School; and, wishing to be remembered in all three capacities, he inserted a clause in the foundation scheme of his charity, whereby the Governors of Theobald's Hospital were empowered to let rooms therein —“(1) to a clergyman officiating at the Church of St. Mary, (2) to a person in the employment of the Corporation of Wexhampton, (3) to a master in the Ilkwell Grammar School, in the event of there being apartments vacant, at a rent of — pounds per annum; provided always that such persons be of good moral character, and are, and do remain, unmarried during enjoyment of the chambers allotted to them.” Should anybody be so sceptical as to doubt this, let him apply to the Charity Commissioners for a copy of the deed, and he will, without fail, be satisfied.

Hence it befell that, a few years ago, the ground floor rooms of No. 2 Theobald's Hospital were tenanted by Mr. John Bindon Winn, assistant town-clerk of Wexhampton, while Mr. Gilbert Crowe, M.A., first classical master in the Ilkwell School, lived in the upper story at No. 8. And as this history will concern itself with the doings of both these gentlemen,

it is satisfactory to know from the first that they were persons of good moral character.

Of the two privileged tenants Crowe was the senior; and though on terms of the closest intimacy with his companion, he frequently expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of the governors in harbouring one who, as he affirmed, could not invariably be trusted. For Winn, quiet, orderly and industrious, had a weakness; he was a confirmed collector of china, and a collector, according to Crowe, would never scruple to purloin any article which the peculiar bent of his mind led him to value. Possibly the willow-pattern plates from which the Companions of the Hospital ate their dinner did not appeal to Winn's aesthetic taste; possibly he was less enthusiastic in pursuit of his hobby, or more honest in his methods of collecting, than Crowe gave him credit for; in any case, the assistant town-clerk remained a tenant for three years, and in all that time, Harold Milverton, the warden, or Custos, never had occasion to complain of having lost so much as the lid of a sauce-boat.

The first floor at No. 2 had long been occupied by Mr. James Staunton, a veteran of ninety years, thirty of which had been passed in the almshouse. Between him and Winn there was a firm friendship; mutual invitations to tea were frequently exchanged, many were the presents of choice snuff sent up-stairs by the lodger on the ground floor to the Senior Companion, and long were the stories to which he listened regarding

the past glories of Wexhampton when James Staunton was its brightest ornament. The grief was universal when the venerable man took to his bed and died therein, bequeathing a fine jar of the real Old Crumpledon Pink ware to him who had kept his snuff-box replenished.

Milverton, the Custos, duly notified the Governors of the vacancy that had thus occurred in the Hospital, but long before they had met to consult upon the appointment of a successor to Mr. Staunton, the two privileged tenants had fully discussed the matter. For it affected them deeply; a new curate was about to take up his duties at St. Mary's, and there was therefore a possibility of his coming among them. The election of some cross-grained old fogey might inconvenience Winn, but the advent of a curate, who must be called upon, would concern the schoolmaster as well.

"I devoutly hope that they will elect a Companion," said Crowe, as he sat in Winn's parlour. "You and I, with the Custos, are enough to uphold the gentility of Theobald's. I admit that the curate would make a fourth at whist, but we cannot count upon him as a player."

Winn filled his pipe from Mr. Staunton's jar, wherein he kept his tobacco. "I have a presentiment that the curate will be my neighbour," he said.

"Never mind your presentiments. There is a very good chance that old Sawyer will be elected,—he that had the little boot-shop in Church Lane. He has a wooden leg that will make the very deuce of a noise over your head, but I should prefer him to the parson."

"The Governors won't have him. He's drunk six days out of the seven."

"Yes, but he's very pious when sober; and three half-pints of beer a

day is all that he'll get here. As for the wooden leg, what does it matter to you? You don't have to correct my pupils' infamous hexameters."

"Don't try to persuade me that you do any work at home, except on Sundays, Crowe. I know better."

"That is a gross libel, and I am going away to refute it. Your neighbour won't trouble you for long, in either case. I clearly foresee that you will soon disqualify yourself for privilege, and I, in frock coat and new trousers, will offer you up as a victim at the horns of the altar, with the curate officiating thereat."

"You may talk as much nonsense about me as you please, since nobody will believe you for a moment. But should I ever prove your surmises correct, don't flatter yourself that you'll be best man, because you won't. It's much more likely that you'll be the bride's father."

Crowe, having no retort to make, betook himself to his quarters across the square, and Winn was left to guess how much of his most private secret was public property. Hitherto he had persuaded himself that he had behaved with great discretion, but now he gathered from Crowe's hint that his frequent visits to one particular house had not escaped notice.

Meanwhile events began to thicken. The curate arrived, and took lodgings in Southgate Street, much to the satisfaction of our two friends in the Hospital. Furthermore, that respectable burgess William Sawyer, having ruined his business and quarrelled with his family, made formal application for admission to the almshouse, and was duly cited to appear before the Governors. This he accordingly did; but in such a condition as gravely to scandalise that august body, whose members unanimously resolved that William's future career

should not develope itself under their auspices. Winn looked forward to an undisturbed tenancy of No. 2, though he might have known that his luck was too good to last.

One evening, as he was perusing the works of Kant (an occupation somewhat uncongenial, and only taken up at the desire of one who has not yet been introduced to the public notice), Milverton called upon him, and gave him tidings that filled his soul with dismay. The curate had visited the Hospital, had been delighted with its monastic seclusion, and had applied for privilege, which the Governors had granted at once.

"This is very annoying," said Winn, after Milverton had told his news. "I understood that he had settled himself in the town. And where do you think of quartering him?"

He knew perfectly well that Milverton had no choice in the matter, but if he were to have a neighbour after all, he would at least enjoy the luxury of a grievance as well.

"Why, if there were any other rooms vacant, I would consult you, of course, but there are none. So I must give him Staunton's chambers, unless you care to move up-stairs."

"Thank you, no. I suppose I must submit; but it's hard to have a parson thrust upon me at this time of day."

"Oh, come, it's not so bad as all that. I've met him, and he seemed a very good sort of fellow."

"Fortunately for him, I'm a very good sort of fellow too. What's his name?"

"Well, you *are* behind the times. Never heard his name, and all Wexhampton talking about him! Garrett, —Sydney Garrett. He's a Cambridge man, from Trinity, I think, and they say he's very strong in the pulpit."

"Then I hope he will confine his energies to their proper sphere, and

abstain from gymnastic exercises over my head. When will he move in?"

"Some time this week. I'm sending the painter round to-morrow to put up his name on the door. You needn't look so dismal; he's an improvement on Sawyer, at all events."

Winn was not so sure about that. For the sad truth must be told that he was no church-goer, and clergymen do not approve of such as he. Mr. Garrett would probably consider it his duty to attempt a reformation in that respect, and would certainly call upon him, unless Winn forestalled him by paying the visit himself, as indeed he knew that he ought to do. However, there was no help for it. The painter came, and *Rev. Sydney Garrett* in staring letters decorated the panels of the door that had long borne the name of James Staunton. On the heels of the painter came the town-carrier, with an immense load of crates and boxes, doubtless containing the theological library of the new tenant; and one day towards the end of the week, when the assistant town-clerk returned from his labours, he gathered from the sounds overhead that the curate had arrived in person. It was evident that he wore heavy boots, and Winn thought that he would have preferred Sawyer, wooden leg and all.

Few men excel in the art of paying calls, and Winn, shy by nature, had not acquired any skill in social etiquette by dint of practice. He knew that somehow or other he must visit Garrett, and the mere thought of the duty made him very dismal. At last a brilliant idea struck him; he would postpone the call, but he would go to church on Sunday and see what the curate looked like. A knowledge of his outward man would remove half the difficulty.

With this end in view, he gave Crowe to understand that he would

be unable to accompany him in a projected boating excursion which had been fixed for the Sunday. The schoolmaster scoffed at his excuses (which, in so far as they affected anxiety concerning his spiritual welfare, were very lame indeed), and alleged that a more worldly motive underlay Winn's intentions. "My dear fellow, of course I understand," he said; "her parents naturally disapprove of your bad habits. Go to church by all means; it won't be for the last time, I'll warrant."

Something of truth there may have been in this, but if there were, it by no means lessened Winn's determination. So on Sunday morning he brushed his hat with unusual care,—partly in honour of the day, partly for the reason that made a more famous bachelor brush his—and punctually at eleven o'clock entered St. Mary's.

It was with a fine sense of virtue that he walked up the aisle and took a seat that commanded a good view of desk and pulpit. Certain twinges of conscience he felt, when he tried in vain to remember the occasion of his last appearance within those sacred walls; but they vanished when he saw that he was not the only sinner who had returned to the fold. The regular members of the congregation were present in full force. There were the Companions, with Milverton in the front pew (the Custos looked not a little surprised when he recognised his friend); there was the Mayor, for whom Winn had a profound contempt, and the Mayoress, whom he held in the utmost dread; and further down the church was the Radcot family, with whom he intended to lunch that day, in defiance of anything that Crowe might say or think. In fact, all Wexhampton was there,—except the curate, and he, of course, was closeted in the vestry with the rector.

But when the well-known figure of the old clergyman appeared, unattended by any stranger, many of his flock were disappointed, and Winn felt peculiarly aggrieved. Was it for this that he had breakfasted an hour earlier than usual, and deprived himself of his morning pipe? But perhaps Mr. Garrett would preach the sermon. Nothing of the sort! So far indeed was the rector from surrendering the pulpit, that he regaled his hearers with his most ancient discourse, bidding them remember Lot's wife, a lady whom they all recollect perfectly well, and whose charms were decidedly on the wane. The Mayor went to sleep, as a silent protest, and Winn had a good mind to follow his example.

The church-going, therefore, was not successful; and yet it had its advantages, for it was certainly better to walk to the Radcots' house with the family, than to go thither alone. So away they went, Mrs. Radcot and her elder daughter preceding Winn and Peggy, while Paterfamilias brought up the rear with a friend, discussing, as they walked along, a question relating to the municipal drainage-system, instead of the morning sermon.

"And what brought you to church?" Peggy inquired of Winn. "I should have stopped at home, only I understood that Mr. Garrett was going to preach. But of course that would have made no difference to you."

"Really, I wonder why you think I must have some special reason for doing what everybody else does as a matter of course," said Winn. "The ancient Inquisitors would have put me to the question if I didn't go to church, but the modern ones cross-examine me if I do."

"Well, as you certainly haven't attended service for the last eight

weeks, I thought that you must have a particular reason for coming to-day."

"Is it really eight weeks? Well, as a matter of fact, you are right. I came because I wanted to see my new fellow-lodger."

"But you could have seen him at home."

"Hardly to such advantage as at church. And after all, I didn't see him, because he happens to be the curate."

"Why, has he rooms in the Hospital?"

"That is what I mean to imply. He lives at No. 2, immediately above me."

"That must be very nice for you."

"Well, I reserve my opinion on that point. Goodness knows, I am an accommodating person, but there are a few things which I must insist upon. He must not ask me to teach in the Sunday School—"

"No, I think he had better not," remarked Peggy.

"He must knock at the door before coming into my room, and on no account must he meddle with my china. If he observes these conditions, I dare say that we shall agree tolerably well."

"You will be very uncomfortable if you don't. And it would be so convenient to be on good terms with him, for if you wanted to give a party, you know, you could borrow his rooms for the occasion. Why, you two might get up a dance in the Hospital! What fun it would be!"

"Yes, there would be room for two couples,—one in his rooms and one in mine. And just by way of a change, the chaperones could sit out on the stairs."

"Oh, we could dance on the green, and dispense with the chaperones altogether. Mr. Milverton would certify that all was quite proper. You must suggest the scheme to Mr.

Garrett when you meet him," said Peggy, as they entered the house.

Now Wexhampton, despite its dignity as a county town, is not so big as to consider the arrival of a new curate a trifling matter. So that on Peggy announcing that Mr. Garrett had obtained the privilege of Theobald's, Winn came in for a chorus of congratulation, as though there were no doubt but that his neighbour would be agreeable to him.

"It is a pity that you could not see him this morning, Mr. Winn," said Mrs. Radcot, "but I understand that he really is going to take the service this afternoon. If you are so very anxious to meet him, you have only to go to church again."

Our friend hastened to intimate, as delicately as possible, that he thought that he had done all that was required of him in the morning, and, having come to a safe anchorage, did not care about venturing forth again so speedily. Indeed it was not usual for Winn to leave the Radcots' house very early in the afternoon. His position in the family circle was as yet undefined, but such as it was, it entitled him to a place at the supper-table whenever he lunched with his friends. And they made no special efforts to entertain him, for while Caroline was playing the piano to her father after supper, and as Mrs. Radcot, Peggy, and Winn were sitting in the garden, his hostess remembered that she had a letter to write, which he would perhaps be kind enough to post for her on his way home. So she left the young people together,—whether intentionally or not, who shall say? Write a letter she certainly did, for Winn took it away with him, when he returned to the Hospital after a very pleasant day, and found it quite safe in his pocket when he donned his coat next Sunday.

It was half-past ten before he reached the Hospital. He generally looked in at the Custos's house on Sunday night, and he knew that Milverton and Crowe were gossiping together in the parlour, for the shadow of the latter was thrown in bold relief against the window-blind. But on this occasion he did not feel drawn to their society ; he wanted to have an hour to himself, in which to consider things in general and the present and prospective condition of his income in particular. A quiet pipe and a little serious thought do no man any harm, and are better suited to a Sabbath evening than the frivolous conversation of schoolmasters and Custodes.

Having lit his pipe, and placed the soda-water and its appurtenances within easy reach, he lay back in the armchair, and abandoned himself to meditation. After all, he was not such a bad fellow ; his income was very tolerable, his prospects excellent, and there could be no doubt but that he was in love. Wherefore, then, should he wait for the town-clerk's shoes ? That functionary would probably last for years yet, and in the meantime—

Oh, confound that curate ! Invisible when wanted, he was painfully audible now that Winn desired to be undisturbed. How could any one arrange his plan of campaign in so delicate a matter as this, with a fellow tramping about overhead as though he were an entire regiment of dragoons, horses and all ? The footsteps hurried to and fro, doors were banged with maddening frequency, and at short intervals sounds were heard as though the reverend gentleman were hurling his boots across the room. Probably he has lost his hymnbook, thought Winn, but he is making a great fuss about it. Slam ! That was the door of his room ; his tread sounded upon

the landing,—upon the staircase,—in the passage—and almost before Winn could realise the situation, the Reverend Sydney Garrett was knocking at his door !

Winn rose, and admitted his visitor. In spite of his heavy tread, the curate of his imagination had been a small, mild cleric of the type represented by Mr. Penley in *THE PRIVATE SECRETARY*, and he was fairly staggered on being confronted with an immense fellow, wearing a moustache that would have done credit to a life-guardsman. The canonical waistcoat and collar contrasted strangely with an ancient cricketing jacket, and as he bore in his hand no work of devotion, but a pipe, his appearance might have shocked a bishop of any austerity.

"Mr. Winn, I think ?" said he, in a very pleasant voice.

Winn admitted the truth of this conjecture.

"I beg your pardon for introducing myself in this way," the curate went on, "but could you oblige me with some tobacco ?"

Now Winn had determined that his neighbour was in search of a hymnbook, an article, we grieve to say, that he did not possess ; but tobacco he had, and his heart went out to a fellow-creature who wanted to smoke and had not the wherewithal to fill his pipe. The curate was immediately ensconced in the rocking-chair, a tumbler set before him, and Winn took down the tobacco-jar from the mantelpiece.

"It's shockingly ill-mannered of me, I know," said Garrett, "and at this time of night, too ! But I had to go to supper with the rector, who doesn't smoke, and when I came home, I found that I hadn't a crumb of tobacco to bless myself with. Only a very little whiskey for me, please,—thanks, that will be plenty. And so, having smelt yours, I thought that

perhaps—I say! Where in the world did you get that lovely jar?"

There could be no doubt about it; this man was of the elect. For Mr. Staunton's jar was the pride of Winn's heart, and the gem of his collection, not to be touched by profane hands, such as those of Milverton and Crowe; but Garrett could appreciate it, and Winn handed it to him without a fear for its safety. "Oh, you take an interest in these things!" said he. "Yes, it's a bit of genuine Old Crumbledon Pink, and rather rare in its way. Pretty, isn't it?"

"Pretty? Why, it's superb!" exclaimed Garrett. "Who was the maker? What is its history, and where does it come from?"

"It bears John Harrow's mark, and he worked a bed of clay at Crumbledon,—a little place some twenty miles away—early in the nineteenth century. This pot is dated 1803. I had it from your predecessor, old James Staunton. But fill your pipe."

Garrett did so, and restored the jar to the mantelpiece. "You're a bold man to expose such a treasure," said he; "if it were mine, I should keep it locked up behind glass."

Winn smiled the smile of superiority. "I'm not much given to breaking my china, and nobody else in Theobald's dare touch it for his life. And taking us all round, we are indifferent honest here, so I don't fear thieves."

"May I have a look at the rest of your pots?" asked the curate. "You seem to have something like a collection."

"A poor thing, but mine own. But I have one or two pieces besides the jar that I flatter myself you won't match very easily." And Winn unlocked his heart and his cabinets to Garrett there and then. Subsequently a move was made to the first floor, where both collectors found a con-

genial task in unpacking the crates containing the curate's trophies,—those very crates which Winn had supposed to be filled with volumes of ecclesiastic lore. It was broad daylight before the senior tenant of No. 2 sought his couch, vowing, as he did so, that he would renounce his evil courses, and become a habitual church-goer. A parson of such taste and discernment could not but be a bright example.

Thus it was that Garrett made a conquest of Winn. But Crowe was not to be won over so easily, and it cost the genial Custos some pains to bring about a meeting between the senior and junior privileged tenants. At last, however, by the exercise of much tact and some small deceit, the schoolmaster was lured into meeting the curate at a little dinner-party given by Milverton in his quarters. It was a solemn feast enough, until it was fortunately discovered that Garrett, among other accomplishments, could sing nigger songs to the banjo. Crowe was famed for his mastery over that instrument, and the curate's performance on it went as far with him as his china-mania had gone with Winn. In fact, the two made a musical evening of it, taking turn about with the banjo, while the Custos and Winn applauded impartially; and when at the close of the entertainment the two songsters, who had never exchanged a word before that night, insisted upon waking the echoes (and it is to be feared the Companions as well) with *Auld Lang Syne*, Milverton was so much elated with the success of his scheme, that he permitted this outrage upon the propriety of Theobald's Hospital to go unchecked.

A week or so after this harmonious gathering had taken place, as Winn was strolling homeward from his duties, which seldom occupied him

later than four o'clock in the afternoon, he met the younger Miss Radcot in High Street, and naturally went out of his way to accompany her. It happened that they had not seen one another since the eventful Sunday of which mention has been made, and Peggy turned the conversation to the topic which had been discussed on that occasion.

"And how do you agree with your neighbour?" she inquired. "Does he make you repeat your catechism?"

"No, never. We agree perfectly, for all his tastes are those of an old bachelor, except one, popularly considered old-maidish, and that I share with him. So we are admirably suited to one another."

"Oh, yes, I know he's a regular chinaman. He fell in love with mamma's Dresden inkpot the very first time he called on us, and I think he would have stolen it, if she had not kept her eye upon him."

"Then he has been to call on you already?"

"Why *already*? Hasn't he been here for three weeks or more? He has called twice, once in his official capacity, and again after dining with us. Some people don't neglect the proprieties so much as others."

"Nobody can accuse me of neglecting them so far as your family is concerned, can they? I had hoped for the pleasure of introducing Garrett to you myself."

"He had no need of an introduction. Clergymen are bound to visit their parishioners for the good of their souls. Well, I like Mr. Garrett, and so do we all." So, too, did Winn, but for some reason not so cordially as he had done before Peggy spoke. "I suppose you have just left the town-hall?" she went on.

"Yes, I was going home to tea,—or rather, I was intending to get

some tea at Milverton's. My house-keeper is out for the day, so I shall make a descent upon the Custos."

"Won't you descend upon us instead, now that you are so near us? And Mr. Milverton ought not to be led into idling his time away with you."

"I shall be delighted to come to tea, but I don't know why you accuse me of idling. Am I not at this very moment working for my London M.A., and at your instigation too?"

"I don't know what you mean by my instigation, but you certainly are not working at this very moment. And I don't believe that you ever open a book after you get home, either."

"What an incredulous person you are! But why should I bother about London M.A.s? I have an Oxford one already, and much study is a weariness to the flesh."

"You ought to mortify the flesh. I hate to see people growing lazy. But of course you needn't go in for the examination unless you like."

"I assure you that I have never liked to go in for an examination, nor do I like doing so now. It is only because other people desire it, that I am to be a candidate once again."

"Oh, I don't care a bit about it."

"Then perhaps I had better withdraw my name, for if you don't care, I'm sure nobody else does."

It was rather unfair of Winn to say this, for by so doing he deprived Peggy of her sex's unquestioned right to the last word. Did she encourage him to tread the paths of learning, she would contradict her own assertion that she cared nothing for his success; and were she to re-affirm her indifference, he might really believe that she meant what she said, which would be unfortunate. So she maintained a rather chilly silence, until they arrived at her home.

As Winn entered the hall, he observed a clerical wide-awake upon the hat-stand, and up-stairs he found the owner thereof. The Reverend Sydney Garrett was taking tea with Mrs. and Miss Radcot, and Winn considered that he should have brought his hat into the room with him. Peggy shook hands with ostentatious friendliness, and the two gentlemen greeted each other with a nod that did not imply intense delight at the meeting.

"Mr. Garrett has been singing the praises of the Hospital, Mr. Winn," said the lady of the house, as she handed him his teacup, "he is quite as enthusiastic as you were, when you came to Wexhampton."

"Ah," said Winn, "and perhaps when he has lived at Theobald's as long as I have, his enthusiasm will have grown as cool as mine." This was not a very pretty speech, nor did it truthfully describe Winn's sentiments; but our friend was in a gloomy vein at the moment.

"You don't mean to say that you are tired of the Hospital?" exclaimed Caroline in genuine surprise.

"I think we have known Mr. Winn long enough to be able to tell when he is speaking in fun, Carol."

"Well, if he is, I don't think he's very amusing, mamma," said Peggy. "Why, what is to become of our tea-party, if he gives up his privilege?"

"What tea-party, Peggy?"

"Why the one that he is going to give in No. 2. Didn't we arrange it all?" said she, turning to Winn for corroboration. "We are going to play tennis on the green, or dance upon it, if Mr. Milverton will lend us his piano. I dare say he will, if we ask him very prettily."

"What a delightful plan," said Garrett, "only I hope that I may be allowed to place my rooms at your disposal."

"Oh, of course that's all part of the scheme," she replied, not a little to Winn's disgust. The curate needed snubbing rather than encouragement.

"But you will have to get the Governors' permission before you turn the green into a tennis-lawn," said Mrs. Radcot.

"Oh, Papa will talk to the Chairman, and Mr. Winn will settle with Mr. Milverton," said Caroline, who evidently sympathised with her sister; "we shouldn't do the grass any harm."

"I hope we shall be able to arrange it," said Garrett (as though it were his tea-party, indeed!). "I am sure I can see no reasonable objection to the scheme."

Winn, meantime, held his peace, and suffered Garrett to talk as he pleased. He was well aware that the Governors would as soon sanction a game of Rugby football on their green as permit it to be marked out into tennis-courts; and even in her wildest flights of fancy Peggy must have known that dancing was wholly out of the question within the precincts of Theobald's Hospital. But there was nothing impracticable in the idea of a modest tea-party, which he could have carried out to his entire satisfaction, if only Garrett had refrained from meddling. For a clergyman the fellow was singularly wanting in tact.

Perhaps Peggy had been unjust when she affirmed her belief that Winn never opened a book in preparation for his forthcoming trial; but on this particular evening his conduct might have given her some grounds for complaint. Crowe was a classical scholar, of the first rank, it is true, but a classical scholar only, so that he could not possibly have assisted Winn to unravel any problem of psychology or ethics. Yet it is a fact that as soon as he had dined,

Winn betook himself to Crowe's rooms, where Milverton soon joined him. Possibly the rumour that the schoolmaster was newly possessed of a box of peculiarly excellent cigars may have accounted for the coincidence of their visits.

Crowe was hard at work in his shirt-sleeves correcting Greek verses, but he laid aside the blue pencil and produced the cigar-box. As a matter of fact, its contents proved to be peculiarly abominable; Winn dropped his cabbage-stalk out of the window, lest a worse thing should befall him, and the Custos, after a more prolonged trial, sank upon the sofa, and begged his host to summon Garrett with all speed, that he might receive ghostly comfort before dissolution.

"You must go unabsoled," said Winn, "for Garrett is on duty to-night, paying pastoral visits."

"Ah yes," said Crowe, "he's quite the faithful shepherd, is Garrett. More especially so, when the ewe-lambs need his care."

"Gossiping again, Crowe?" said Milverton, who, like many another censor, was not above taking an interest in the very weaknesses that he reproved. "What's your latest story?"

"Oh, nothing worth mentioning. Besides, it's no sin for a man to labour in his vocation, and Garrett is paid cash for paying visits. I wish I could earn my daily bread on such easy terms. However, I have heard it whispered that he has turned his attention rather particularly to one household."

"Be more explicit, you confounded old scandal-monger."

"I never mention names. Perhaps the household in question is subject to some evil influence,—such as Winn there might exert—and the *padre* is bent upon counteracting it. That's possible, you know."

"I don't know why you drag me into the matter," said Winn; "and as for evil influence, my character is better than yours, any day of the week."

"Well, of course Garrett may have some worldly motive for his visits. And on the whole, I venture to prophesy that although he was the last of us to come, he will be the first to go."

"You have said the same of Winn a hundred times," replied Milverton, "and if I were to set up as a prophet (which God forbid!) I should say that both he and Garrett will be privileged tenants long after you are married and done for."

"I don't wish to disparage Winn, who is a man of great and undoubted attractions; but I fear that his popularity has waned since the curate took the field. *Arma cedunt toga*,—which, being interpreted, means that a barrister's wig stands a poor chance against a parson's surplice."

This conversation was displeasing to Winn, and he spoke the words of reproof. "There is no more contemptible creature in the world than the male gossip," he said. "With what old woman did you have tea to-day, Crowe?"

"Without descending to a *bu quoque*, I reply,—with none. I've been playing for the school against the town."

"Yes, and you ran your captain out in the first innings, and were bowled first ball in the second," remarked the Custos.

"Moreover, your cigars are villainous," said Winn. "I wonder where you expect to go to, when you die."

As he was unable or unwilling to give a satisfactory answer to Winn's question, Crowe pursued the subject no further, and his guests departed without learning anything more

definite with regard to Garrett's visits. But he had said enough for Winn, whose soul was disquieted within him. The schoolmaster had always been given to romancing ; and even if he had not been drawing upon his very fertile imagination, he probably had only retailed some of the gossip that is to be picked up for the trouble of stooping in such a town as Wexhampton. Yet it could not be denied that Garrett had been to the Radcots' three times in as many weeks, and had further expressed himself as eager to entertain the ladies of the family at No. 2. In short, Winn was harbouring jealousy against him, and that evil passion was not decreased at his next meeting with the curate, who called on him a few days later, to show him a little Wedgwood pot that he had bought of the pawn-broker in Borough Lane. It was really a very superior little pot, but Winn showed no great enthusiasm about it.

"By the way," said Garrett, "have you heard that Mrs. Radcot is down with the flu ? We shall have to postpone our little party, I'm afraid."

"Indeed? I'm sorry to hear it. But I had not intended to have the party until after my return from London."

"Why, are you going up to town ?"

"Yes, I'm sitting for my London M.A. I'm off the day after tomorrow."

"I wish you luck,—even though you don't appreciate Wedgwood. We'll celebrate your success with the tea-party. I say,—have you known the Radcots long ?"

"I knew Mr. Radcot slightly before I came here. In fact, he helped me to get my berth."

"Ah, if I had known him before, perhaps I should have been a bishop by this time. Well, I won't interfere with your reading. Good-night."

"Good-night," grunted Winn, and resumed his studies, though it is to be feared that he did not acquire much philosophy of a practical nature thereby.

A change of air is often prescribed by medical men for patients suffering under mental, as well as bodily complaints ; and it was perhaps as well that Winn had to betake himself to the metropolis at this juncture. And as the results of his efforts after academic fame will have no further bearing on the present history, it may here be briefly recorded that he was most dismally plucked ; so that if the prospect of distinction had been the sole object of his journey, he might just as well have stayed at home. But he had not set foot on a London pavement for more than a year, and great was the jubilation among the companions of his youth at his reappearance. There was Jack Amberley, now established as a doctor in Bloomsbury, and with him was Ray, the man of no occupation, and Wilbury the journalist, none of whom ever thought of going to bed before one o'clock, and who only required Winn's presence as an excuse for prolonging their revels till day-break ; and there was Hamilton of the British Museum, who understood china better than any other man in Europe ; and little Hunter, who had a wonderful acquaintance with all manner of queer foreign restaurants in Soho and its neighbourhood, where a man may dine like a lord for one and sixpence, wine and waiter's tip included. In short, Winn enjoyed himself immensely, when once his papers had been disposed of, and had the further satisfaction of knowing that he was fulfilling the behests of his lady ; or so at least he persuaded himself, but perhaps she would have desired his earlier return to Wexhampton. And indeed, after

three weeks of merry-making, our friend began to tire of gaiety. After all, he was a quiet man by nature, and there was no place like Theobald's for peace and quiet; dinners at Roche's and the Café des Gourmets were luxurious, no doubt, but he was one who at all times preferred comfort to luxury; Hamilton's china was not nearly so interesting as his own, while, to sum up the whole, Wexhampton could afford one attraction that all London had not to offer. It was a perfect age since he had seen Peggy, and he took the train at Paddington in higher spirits than gentlemen returning from a holiday are wont to do.

And so the wanderer returned to his home. The town was fast asleep in the five o'clock sunshine of a summer afternoon, as he walked through the streets of Wexhampton. The Hospital Square was silent as the grave, and deserted save for a couple of Companions who were dozing in the shade of the founder's statue. Winn entered his room, shut the door behind him, and dropped into a chair with a sigh of satisfaction.

O dulce domum! How good it was to be home again! There stood the bookcase with its ordered ranks of old friends ranged lovingly side by side; there was the dear old wicker chair, and the desk whereat he had written the brilliant novel which indiscriminating publishers had one and all declined; there stood the china cabinets, faithfully guarding the treasures within; and there on the mantelpiece, most cherished of all his possessions, was—

No! It was not! He could not believe his eyes, and rubbed them desperately, sending his glasses flying across the room as a consequence. But had they remained on his nose, and had they been of the highest

power ever supplied by Messrs. Curry and Paxton, they could not have helped their wearer to see what was certainly not in its place. The Old Crumbledon Pink—the pot of pots—the priceless, unique tobacco-jar, was gone, had vanished utterly and completely! Winn's universe was shattered about him, and he cursed the day that saw him leave Wexhampton. Here was a pretty home-coming!

Mrs. Dick, kindest of housekeepers, had marked the return of her charge, and hastened to bring him the refreshment of a cup of tea. A habitual respect for her prevented Winn from making the direct accusation that rose to his lips, but the purport of his questions was not to be concealed, and Mrs. Dick refuted the charge of having broken the jar with virtuous indignation. The pink one that stood on the mantelpiece? Well, to be sure, and it wasn't there, neither, but she hoped that she knew Mr. Winn better than to meddle with any of his chinaware at this time of day. When had she last seen it? On Tuesday, when she swept the room, but she wouldn't say for certain. Had any one been in the room during his absence? Not as she knew of. The Custos had called once, to know when Mr. Winn would return, but he never so much as opened the door, but after speaking to her, went up-stairs to see Mr. Garrett. Finally and to conclude, Mr. Winn had better drink his tea before it grew cold.

The accused was dismissed, without a stain on her character, and Winn sipped his tea, pondering deeply the while. At last he arose, and with cautious tread went up to Garrett's apartments. Now was it likely that a clerk in holy orders would fall so low as to steal a tobacco-jar? A fig for clerks, and holy orders too!

Garrett was a collector first, and a curate afterwards. Winn knew the breed.

The room was empty, and Winn, with a shamelessness that surprised himself, began a thorough search among Garrett's properties. Though his investigations were fruitless so far as they concerned the Old Crumbledon Pink, they were not uninstructive in themselves, and afforded him more knowledge of his neighbour's habits, both professional and private, than he could have obtained otherwise. Thus, he discovered a packet of old sermons, labelled *Stale—to be given again in the winter, mutatis mutandis*—a find which shook his faith in Garrett's industry not a little. Also, it was evident that the curate was a man of untidy habits, for articles of wearing apparel were scattered promiscuously about his bedroom, and the contents of his chest of drawers were in sad disorder. And pray what had Winn to do with the chest of drawers? He was looking for his tobacco-jar, which might have been concealed among Garrett's shirts.

He did not find it; but he found something else that did not allay his suspicions. He had returned to the sitting-room, and as he groped among the papers that heaped the window-seat, he found a little pile of tobacco beneath a religious magazine. There might have been some two ounces; it was very dry, and on closer examination, Winn perceived that if it was not his favourite Laughing Girl mixture, it was most uncommonly like it. There was about that quantity left in the jar when he had gone up to London.

Now this looked bad; and Winn was rapidly building up a case against the curate à la Sherlock Holmes, when he heard a well-known step in the passage below. Flight was out of the question, so he instantly feigned

to be in search of something—not the jar—which might serve as an excuse for his uninvited presence. Garrett swung the door open, and then, seeing his friend in the room, came to a dead pause.

"Hullo! So you're back again?" said the curate.

"Yes, I came home about an hour ago."

"Are you looking for anything?"

That was precisely the case. "Only for the Wexhampton paper," said Winn.

"I'm afraid I don't take it in. Sit down; I'm just going to have some tea."

"Thanks, I've just had mine. I say, Garrett, it's a very queer thing, but I can't find my tobacco-jar."

"What, the Crumbledon Pink? You don't mean to say that you've lost it?"

"No, I've not lost it, but somebody else has lost it for me. You can't throw any light on the matter, I suppose?"

The curate screwed up his mouth as though he were going to whistle, paused, and then shook his head. "Let's see," he said, "it's Monday to-day,—the jar was all right on Wednesday, for Mrs. Radcot and her daughters came to tea with me, and I took them into your room on purpose to show it to them. I haven't seen it since."

Once more the boding voice of Crowe rang in Winn's ear, and his anger was stirred against Garrett for that he had taken unfair advantage of his absence. The curate had made the tea-party his own; surely he was capable of appropriating the jar as well.

"Smoke?" said Garrett, offering his pouch.

Winn did not permit the chance to escape him. "Pioneer? No thanks; do you mind me trying that stuff on

the window-seat? It looks more to my taste."

"But my dear man, it's been lying there for weeks, and isn't fit to smoke."

Winn didn't care about that, and filled his pipe. There was no mistake. "Why, this is Laughing Girl," he said.

"Yes, I've been giving it a trial. I don't take to it particularly."

"You shouldn't let it get so dry. Keep it in a pot, as I do,—or as I did, for I shall not have the heart to use a jar again."

"Oh, I expect the Pink will turn up in time. Things will disappear now and then, you know."

With this poor consolation Winn had to content himself, for he dared pump the curate no further. Garrett could not fail to have grasped the true explanation of his presence, as soon as he had blurted out the news of his loss. And so he changed the subject, inquiring, not without some difficulty, as to the tea-party which was to have been his. He learned that Mrs. Radcot was quite herself again, and that Caroline had regretted his absence from the scene of the festivity,—which was very kind of her, no doubt, but regret from that quarter did not greatly affect him.

"And you showed them my rooms, too?" he said.

"Your rooms? No, I didn't. Why should I?"

"But you told me just now that you took the girls to see my jar," Winn insisted, hot upon the scent again. For why did Garrett contradict himself? And how came he by that tobacco,—he, who smoked Pioneer, and Pioneer only? Winn did not believe that his friend had ever experimented with the Laughing Girl mixture, since that first occasion when necessity had driven him to fill his pipe with it.

However, Garrett looked perfectly innocent. "Oh yes, I remember. We just went inside for a couple of minutes, but no harm came to the pot then, at all events. And by the way, Miss Peggy asked after you, and said that she hoped you would pass this time."

Her message was more to Winn's taste than that of her sister had been, but it was not exactly soothing. There was surely no occasion for Peggy to have alluded to past failures. A painful silence ensued, and Winn was just about to withdraw, when Milverton appeared, considerably to the relief of both parties. "Back again from the torture-chamber?" quoth the Custos. "Well, Winn, how did it go? First-class and gold medal, or stupendous plough?"

"I don't know, and I don't care a toss. I've lost my tobacco-jar."

"Queer thing, very," said Garrett.

"Not at all, with a rival collector up-stairs," said the irreverent Milverton.

"Oh, come, Winn's perfectly welcome to search my rooms if he suspects me," said the curate, with just the faintest note of sarcasm in his voice. Winn found occasion to use his handkerchief.

"Let's see—wasn't it a blue one with handles?" said Milverton, kindly anxious to sympathise with the bereaved one. But the question was unfortunate.

"Good heavens! And you must have seen it twice a week at least for the last month! It was pink, man, pink!"

"Was it, though? I really thought it was blue,—or green. Well, it'll turn up, no doubt. I want you fellows to dine with me to-night. Crowe's coming."

"I'm sorry. I dine early with the rector, and I've got to take an evening service at half-past seven."

"Well, look in on your way back. You'll come, Winn?"

"Thanks; but I can't promise to be very good company in my present frame of mind."

"Oh, we'll cheer you up. Crowe will give you one of his excellent cigars, and you'll forget all your other troubles at once. You'd better come across with me now, or Garrett will be late for the rector's feed."

Perhaps Milverton had never presided over a more gloomy entertainment than that to which he had invited Winn. The collector's thoughts were dwelling on his loss, and when they were expressed verbally, were not such as tended to enlivenment. Crowe, too, was saturnine beyond custom; Harris *major* had failed to obtain the Exeter Scholarship, for which the schoolmaster had coached him long and carefully, and the disappointment which he had generously concealed from his pupil was fully displayed in the presence of his companions. He had no sympathy with Winn's misfortune, for he met that gentleman's first allusion to his tobacco-jar with the curt remark, "Didn't know you had one," feigning an ignorance highly exasperating; and even the Custos looked a trifle bored when the subject was introduced for the third time. As for Garrett, he never appeared at all, and the party must be set down as one of Milverton's few failures in the social line.

The days went by, and nothing was seen or heard of the Old Crumbledon Pink. But for the help and sympathy extended to him by Garrett, Winn might have fretted himself into a brain-fever, so entirely was he unmanned by its disappearance. All possible places of concealment were ransacked, and between them, the two chinamaniacs turned the whole house upside down, in-

curring the high displeasure of Mrs. Dick by insisting on an investigation of her pantry. It was in vain; by Saturday evening Winn had lost all hope of ever recovering his treasure, and it behoved those who valued their safety to give him a wide berth.

Sunday came,—as fine a Sunday as ever drew a loiterer to church—but at ten o'clock Winn was sitting over his breakfast with a frown on his face and black misery in his heart. Not even the prospect of lunching with the Radcots gave him any consolation, whence it may be inferred that he was in a truly parlous state. There was a knock at the door, and Garrett, in full Sabbath trim, made his appearance.

"Is this a time to be eating sausages?" said he. "Aren't you coming to church?"

"No, I'm not," snarled Winn, "and I wonder that you ask me. How dare I, when I have not forgiven the miscreant who has robbed me?"

"Oh, nonsense, nobody has robbed you," said the curate, with some asperity. "I expect that you mislaid the pot before you went to town."

This was not to be endured. "Do I look like a born fool? Where the deuce could I mislay it? You know as well as I do that we have searched the very dust-bins. Oh, if ever I find the scoundrel, I'll do him to death by slow tortures. Last night I dreamed that I impaled him on the town-hall railings. I wish the dream would come true."

"If that's your state of mind, you certainly do well to stay at home," said the pious man, and went his way. The bells began to ring; the Companions gathered in the hall, and presently filed out in pairs like the animals leaving the Ark, Milverton, equipped with bible, prayerbook, hymnbook too, heading the proces-

sion. But Winn remained behind, savage of soul, and unforgiving of spirit.

As he was prowling round his room, looking through his cabinets for the hundredth time, he was roused by a voice that hailed him through the open window. "Hullo," it said, "still on the pot-hunt, I see?"

He turned, and beheld Crowe, a godless figure in flannels and an old straw hat. The schoolmaster entered, and sat down on the table. Having smoked in silence for a short time, he thus began: "It's no good worrying, my dear fellow, you'll never see it again. I thought the *padre* had sneaked it at first, but he couldn't possibly have gone on living with you, if he had not had a clear conscience. No, it's the old story; *cherchez la femme*."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, that Mrs. Dick has pawned your property in order to indulge a craving for strong waters. There never was a laundress or bedmaker yet that wouldn't drink a pie-dish, let alone a tobacco-jar."

"You don't know Mrs. Dick. I'd as soon suspect—"

"Well, you know, you needn't mention names. I understand whom you mean without them."

"Look here," said Winn; "I'm in a very bad temper to-day, and if you are going to behave like an ass, I wish you'd go and bray on the green."

"Why, now I come to look at you, you are a trifle off colour. Never mind, I've got some old jam-pots at home, and you shall have one, if you're good. Come to lunch and take your pick." And the tormentor withdrew, having performed the part of Job's comforter to admiration.

But it was now twelve o'clock, and high time for Winn to go toward. As he laced his boots, a dim perception entered his head that the truly

wise man has ever two strings to his bow, and on approaching the Radcots' house he grew comparatively resigned to his fate. Never again would he see the Old Crumpledon Pink, but he was young, and life might still have something in store for him. Peggy remained; and as he waited for admission on the doorstep of her abode, he actually thought more of her than of the jar. Was Mrs. Radcot at home? No, the family were all at church, except Miss Peggy, and she was upstairs in the drawing-room. So upstairs went her lover, and no Peggy could he see.

Momentarily disappointed, he glanced round the room, and then, heedless of the chair and the Persian cat that he upset in his progress, dashed across to a little table that stood in the bay-window. For there—there in the Radcots' drawing-room—filled with a great bunch of roses, red, white and yellow—was the long lost treasure! Yes, there it was, the Old Crumpledon Pink, whole, round and sound, quite at home in its strange surroundings, as though it had never served a higher purpose than that of a flower-vase since it was first moulded. He caught it up in an ecstasy of joy, and was literally hugging it to his heart, when Peggy came into the room.

Let others blame him; but you, sir, who recently found your ancestral seal-ring in the nursery toy-box, and I, who rescued my Pickering Horace from the limbo of outcast schoolbooks to which it had been consigned by irreverent hands, will find an excuse for Winn's conduct at this juncture. A month had passed since he had seen the lady of his heart, and she had occupied his thoughts continuously until he had been deprived of his tobacco-jar; and yet, now that she stood before him, prettier and sweeter than ever, he stood stock

still, embracing his trove, and his only greeting was: "Wherever did you get this from?"

Peggy became very stiff and proud. "You are really too polite. Mamma is quite well, thank you, and will be glad to hear that you have inquired after her."

"I am utterly ashamed of myself," said Winn, with sincere penitence; "I am delighted to hear of Mrs. Radcot's recovery. But,—but I could not have foreseen that I should find this jar in your house."

"And may I ask why you hug it in that ridiculous way? We shall never be forgiven if you break it."

"I should never forgive myself. You see, I have been hunting high and low through Theobald's for it, and am naturally surprised to find it in your possession."

"Really? And is Mr. Garrett obliged to consult you, before lending his own property to his friends?"

Oh, Garrett, Garrett! *Pena pede claudio*—this was showing the cloven hoof with a vengeance! "But my dear Peggy—!"

"I beg your pardon?" said she, with such hauteur as to make it clear that she resented the form of address. Had Winn behaved with more discretion at the beginning, perhaps he might have called her what he pleased. "But my dear Miss Peggy—"

"I beg your pardon?"

"But, Miss Radcot [she liked this even less, but she had to put up with it], the point is that it isn't Mr. Garrett's property at all, but mine!"

"What nonsense! Why, it was in his room when we went to tea with him the other day; and he lent it to Carol, because she said it would be such a lovely thing to paint. That's how it comes here, since you are so anxious to know."

The solution of the mystery should now have been clear to him, for there

is only one thing that can induce an honest and truthful cleric to steal and fib like a layman, and a shady one it is. But misled by jealousy and by that gossiping Crowe, Winn was still unable to find an excuse for Garrett's proceeding. "Well," he said, "of all the—the cool cheek! Look here," and he was going to turn it upside down, when Peggy stopped him. "Take care, silly," said she, in her turn verging upon the familiar; "you'll spoil the carpet! It's full of water."

"Well, then, look here," and he held the jar on high, so that she could see it underneath, where his initials were inscribed, "what's that?"

She peered up at it. "J. B. W.! Then it is yours, after all?"

"Of course it's mine. But what in the world was Garrett about, when he took it from my room, and lent it to your sister? He's been telling me the most awful fibs you can imagine, to conceal his guilt."

"Oh, the villain!" said Peggy, and began to laugh.

"But, Peggy, it's no laughing matter. Kleptomania is a very serious failing in a clergyman. Is the man mad?"

"More or less, I suppose. Can't you see for yourself, or do you want me to tell you why he lent it to Carol?"

And enlightenment suddenly descended upon Winn. He hesitated an instant, and then, "I think that I should like you to tell me, please," he said.

She looked a little alarmed at this proposal, for indeed it was intended to lead up to another. "Whatever was the reason, a curate should be above theft," said she, keeping her eyes fixed upon the carpet.

"Even curates are human," said Winn very sententiously, "and being human myself, I sympathise with him."

"What, although he stole your china?"

"Although he stole my china." He set the Old Pink upon the table again, and mustered up his courage. "I have a fellow feeling for him, because I believe that, saving my poor honesty, our positions are very similar. I haven't run away with any of his properties, but if I got the chance, I would steal the whole world, if it would do me any service with you, Peggy dear."

And what did Peggy say to that? Not very much, but her answer satisfied Winn completely, and if an earthquake had shattered the Old Crumbledon Pink to bits there and then, he would not have cared a pin, nor have given half a thought to its fragments. Much may happen in the roasting of an egg; for a week had Winn gone in quest of the jar, and for two years in pursuit of Peggy, and now, lo and behold, he had found both in the space of fifteen minutes! All that was necessary had been said; and all that was to be done in the circumstances took up very little time. Perhaps this was just as well, for the sound of voices in the hall announced the return of the churchgoers. Peggy snatched her hand away from Winn, the door opened, and in they came, Mr. Radcot, Mrs. Radcot, Caroline,—and the Reverend Sydney Garrett.

There was something truly magnificent in the culprit's bravado. The stolen jar was in full view on the table, and the lawful owner stood beside it; the game was up, yet even at this last, the curate showed no sign of dismay or contrition. Indeed Winn looked the more confused of the two, for had the party come upon the scene one minute earlier, or had they ascended the stairs in silence, his situation would have been extremely embarrassing. Even as it

was, he fancied that papa and mamma were not without their suspicions.

However that may have been, it was now time for luncheon, when romance is out of place. The bell rang, and they went down-stairs to the dining-room, where Winn took his seat beside Peggy and Garrett his beside her sister. No reference had yet been made to the Old Pink, but from the set of his face it was evident that the curate was preparing for the fray, and after saying grace at his host's desire, he relapsed into silence. Winn, too, was rather chary of his words, and so was Peggy; Caroline, the innocent receiver of stolen goods, still ignorant of the morning's events, was the conversationalist of the party. But this state of things could not continue for long. With the appearance of gooseberry-tart came the inevitable explosion, and it was Mrs. Radcot who fired the mine.

"I hope you are in no hurry to recover your beautiful jar, Mr. Garrett," said she. "Carol finished her drawing yesterday, but we can scarcely bring ourselves to part with the original just yet."

Winn scowled across the table at the curate, who stared back at him with a brazen countenance. "If I might have the shadow, I would gladly leave the substance with you," he replied. "I am sure it could not be in safer keeping." And he favoured Winn with another stare; but for manners, he would have winked at him.

"It's something of an heirloom, I suppose, Garrett?" said Mr. Radcot, who imagined that he had a taste for china.

"Oh yes, it's been in the family for years," was the answer.

Our friend could contain himself no longer. "There's another little jar coming your way soon, isn't there,

Garrett?" he asked, with only seeming innocence. But he was sorry that he had broken silence, for he received a sharp blow on the shin, as it were from a pointed shoe, that hurt him very much, and warned him that he would do well to hold his tongue. Could it really have been Peggy who treated him so? Happily his utterance was taken literally by those who were not in the secret.

"Then Mr. Garrett must not lend it to me," said Mrs. Radcot, "or perhaps you would never see it, Mr. Winn."

"I should certainly suspect you of having it, Mrs. Radcot, since I have found this bit of Old Crumbledon in your possession. I was a little puzzled as to what had become of it, when I could not see it in his room."

"Ah, Winn, I suppose you wanted to steal it? What rogues you collectors are!" said Mr. Radcot, hitting the right nail on the wrong head. And Garrett winced for the first time.

These alarms and excursions went no further at the time, for lunch being over, the curate hastened away to his duties, probably regretting for once the promise that bound him to return for tea. And in his absence Winn also discharged his duty like a man, and Mr. Radcot had to forego his customary perusal of *THE SPECTATOR* to listen to the confession of his would-be son-in-law. The interview was short, and eminently satisfactory to the party most concerned. As for the scenes that ensued between Winn and the other members of the family, they may be omitted as not strictly pertaining to the present history.

At five o'clock Garrett returned. Apparently he had made up his mind to have it out with his friend, for he steadily pursued him all the evening with intent to find him by himself,

which he failed to do, as Peggy was somehow always in the way. He made his last attempt at ten o'clock, when he rose to go home. "Am I to have your company back to the Hospital?" he asked, when he had taken leave of the family.

Winn smiled upon him sweetly. "Well, I think not," he said. "I shall stay a little longer,—to post Mrs. Radcot's letters." And the curate departed.

An hour or so later, Winn followed him. It was a beautiful night, and he walked along with his head somewhere up among the stars, firmly convinced that they, together with the rest of the universe, had been made and created for the especial behoof of John Bindon Winn. So mightily was he uplifted that on arriving at Theobald's he failed to remark that a light was burning in his parlour, where no light should have been before he kindled it himself. He marched into his room as though he were a king opening parliament at the very least, and found himself in the presence of Garrett, who, seated in his favourite chair, and smoking a pipe with gloomy countenance, was patiently awaiting his arrival.

"Oh, here you are, are you?" said Winn, as he threw his hat on to the window-seat.

"Here I am, as you remark," replied the curate. Nothing could avert the explanations now, and they must necessarily come from both parties. Winn took a pipe from the mantelpiece, and from sheer habit stretched out his hand for the tobacco-jar. Garrett noticed the action, and as Winn turned a reproving glance upon him, their eyes met. The brazen stare that had decorated Garrett's features earlier in the day had disappeared and was replaced by an expression, half shame-faced, half

comic, that was much more becoming. "I have been waiting for you ever so long," he began; "it was very decent of you not to give me away before those people this afternoon."

"Considering that you offered to give my pot away before me, I am inclined to agree with you," said Winn, as he lit a match.

"I suppose you can guess how I came to make such a silly ass of myself?"

"I begin to have an idea."

"I was tidying up my room in preparation for my party, and I borrowed the Old Pink to heighten the effect. She did you the honour to admire it, so I asked her to take it away with her, if she cared to make a drawing of it. I didn't expect you home so soon. I suppose I ought to be sorry; but I'm afraid I'm not."

"H'm," said Winn, "you must be pretty far gone."

The curate looked at him rather queerly. "Sure you wouldn't have done the same?" he said.

"Why do you ask?"

"Well, because I've got eyes in my head, and for some time past I have suspected that the Radcots' house has an attraction for you as well as for me."

"Well, perhaps it has," Winn coyly admitted.

"I thought we were in the same boat," said Garrett. "Crowe put me on the scent."

"Crowe is a wicked gossip, and you mustn't believe half of what he tells you." But in spite of his words Winn could not conceal his triumph.

"You don't mean to say—?"

"I do indeed. We settled it

between us just before lunch to-day. Isn't it glorious?"

The thief rose up, and smote Winn cordially upon the back. "You are probably the happiest man alive," he said, "for you possess the most beautiful jar, and the most charming girl but one, in the whole world."

"No thanks to you though. There, never mind! Wouldn't you like to drink our healths?"

"Rather. No, you needn't make it weak to-night. *Prosit!*" And they clinked glasses.

"Now I know how you came by that tobacco I found in your room," said Winn.

"I fear you didn't confine your researches to my parlour alone. I noticed your tracks in the bedroom, you most suspicious of men. Don't be in such a hurry to think ill of your neighbours another time."

"And then they won't be found out!"

"Exactly so. I leave you to your glory. Good-night."

"One moment," said Winn. "As you said, we are in the same boat. Now just to show my sympathy with you, I shall be happy to lend you anything that my future sister-in-law might like to paint, provided that you give me notice. For instance, I have a remarkably fine old meerschaum pipe—"

The Reverend Sydney forgot his sacred character again. "Damn your old meerschaum pipe," he called out from over the banisters.

And to-day the privilege of Theobald's Hospital is upheld by Crowe alone.

ROBIN ROSCOE.

